

# NCCU NOW



**FALL 2011** A MAGAZINE FOR THE  
FACULTY, ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF  
NORTH CAROLINA CENTRAL UNIVERSITY

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NORMAL

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2011 EVENTS

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**CASH CROP**

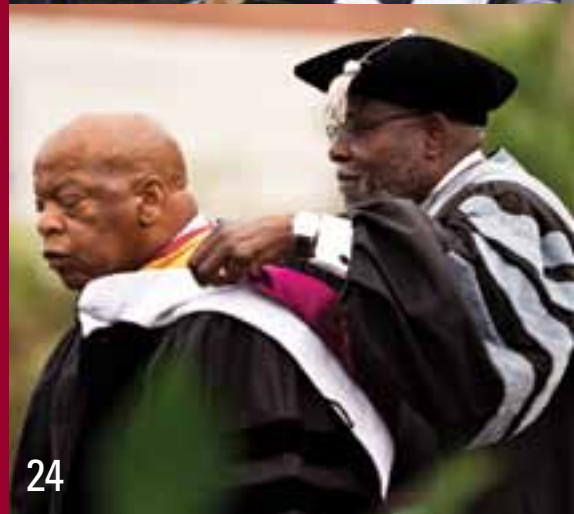
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**ON THE COVER** "Cash Crop," a multimedia work by Stephen Hayes '06, is on exhibit through Oct. 30 at the NCCU Art Museum. The massive work, which depicts the horrors of the trans-Atlantic voyage of enslaved Africans, received wide critical acclaim in Atlanta last year and was featured in an article in the Winter 2010 issue of NCCU NOW. PHOTO BY OMAR RICHARDSON

N O R T H C A R O L I N A C E N T R A L U N I V E R S I T Y



# FROM THE CHANCELLOR

Dear Alumni and Friends,

Welcome to the fall issue of NCCU NOW. These are turbulent economic and budgetary times for North Carolina Central University, and I want to take this opportunity to let you know how we plan to move forward. I have adopted the phrase *the New Normal* to describe this altered reality in which we find ourselves, where higher education is no longer held sacrosanct and graduation statistics are viewed as return on investment. As I explain in some detail in an article on Page 11, it's a harsh new environment that we must engage strategically or risk falling by the wayside. Fortunately, I have always viewed student success of foremost importance.

Last fall, the UNC Board of Governors adopted academic performance goals for each institution based on the profile of the students served. For NCCU, we have been charged with maintaining an 80 percent first-to-second-year retention rate and a minimum six-year graduation rate of 53 percent. To achieve these goals, we've raised the bar.

We've increased admission standards, and have invested heavily in the Honors Program, as well as the Centennial, Annie Day Shepard and First-in-Flight scholars programs, and the Summer Bridge program. We're also redesigning required general education courses.

We've adopted a new academic progression policy effective fall 2012. All NCCU students must maintain a GPA of 2.0 to be eligible for continued enrollment. Such a change is critical if we are to meet and exceed our graduation goals. Similarly, we've raised the bar for graduating with honors. All these efforts are aimed at increasing the preparedness of our students for the world of work or for graduate study.

I am pleased that so many more of our alumni and friends are giving to NCCU than ever before. With the cuts in state funding and the elimination of summer Pell Grants, the need for scholarship support has never been greater. We are working to ensure that the students we have are serious about earning their degree. It is heartbreaking when financial need overwhelms all of our best efforts and their sacrifice.

Thank you so much for all that you have done and continue to do on their behalf.

Sincerely,



Charlie Nelms  
Chancellor

## NCCU NOW

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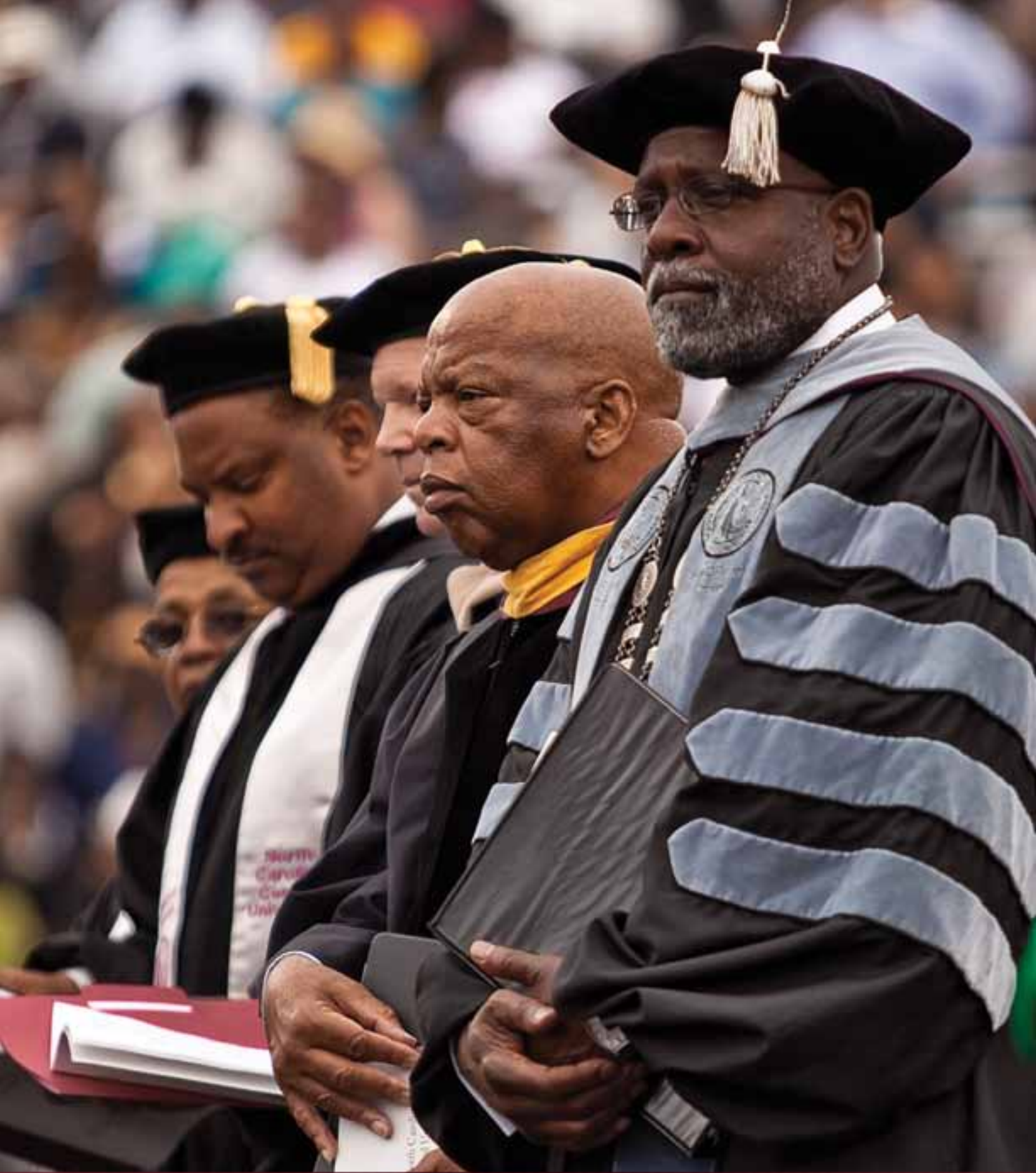
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Undergraduate commencement speaker John Lewis, center, joins Chancellor Nelms and others on the podium at O'Kelly-Riddick Stadium at the May 14 ceremony. Commencement stories, pages 22 and 24.

PHOTO BY CHIOKE D. BROWN



## NCCU Gains Full NCAA Division I Membership

BY KYLE SERBA

NCCU is now a full member of NCAA Division I athletics. The five-year reclassification process moving from Division II is complete, and the Eagles are eligible to participate in post-season championships starting this fall.

"Gaining full membership to NCAA Division I has been our goal for several years now and I am excited and delighted to see it come to pass," Chancellor Charlie Nelms said upon receiving the official word from the NCAA on Aug. 11. "I appreciate what a tremendous effort this was for Athletic Director Ingrid Wicker-McCree and her entire team, and I thank and congratulate them for the superb job they did. The Eagles have arrived!"

Wicker-McCree, who has overseen the long transition, said she was thrilled by the NCAA's final decision. "We worked diligently toward meeting all of the requirements set forth by the NCAA, and with the continued support from Dr. Nelms



### APPOINTMENTS ▼

## DEBBIE THOMAS / Provost /

Debbie Thomas, an administrator and scholar with more than 20 years of experience in higher education, has been named provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs at North Carolina Central University.

As provost, Thomas is the university's chief academic officer and reports directly to Chancellor Charlie Nelms. She oversees academic programs and provides leadership for deans, department chairs and faculty.

Thomas, who previously served as associate provost and associate vice chancellor, assumed her new role in July. She succeeds Kwesi E. Aggrey, who resigned to return to a full-time teaching and research position in the Department of

Chemistry. The University of North Carolina General Administration agreed to waive the normal search process so the critical vacancy could be filled quickly.

Nelms said Thomas is dedicated to NCCU's new Strategic Plan. "She's a seasoned administrator," he said. "And we're fortunate to have her available to move into the provost's role and continue the momentum of change here at NCCU."

Thomas came to NCCU in 2010 from Indiana University Northwest, where she was executive director of the Center for Urban and Regional Excellence. The center focused on community outreach and scholarly engagement in a seven-county



area. She previously served as associate provost for institutional effectiveness at Fisk University and as assistant to the vice chancellor of academic affairs at the University of Arkansas at

Monticello. She was an associate professor and coordinator of graduate programs for the College of Education at the University of Central Florida, and the director of teacher education and certification for Fisk University.

"I consider it an honor to serve NCCU in this capacity," Thomas said. "I'm looking forward to working with students, faculty, staff and the administration to advance our academic mission."

Thomas has a bachelor's degree in journalism and a master's degree in communication studies from the University of Louisiana at Monroe. She holds a Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.



and our Board of Trustees, we accomplished a magnificent task," she said. "We will strive to continue meeting all NCAA Division I and MEAC (Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference) requirements. Our continued goals are to graduate our student-athletes, win championships and maintain institutional control."

The journey to Division I began in November 2005, when the NCCU Board of Trustees approved making an application to the NCAA to reclassify its

athletics program. The Eagles captured eight conference team titles in their final two seasons as a Division II member in the CIAA (Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association) before competing as an independent without conference affiliation starting in fall 2007.

NCCU joined the MEAC last summer, and spent the 2010-11 campaign as a provisional member of the conference, meaning that Eagles teams were not eligible to compete for a conference championship.

To meet Division I standards, NCCU made some major improvements in its facilities, the most visible being installation of a new artificial turf field and a digital scoreboard at O'Kelly-Riddick Stadium. The university also increased its minimum number of scholarships in each sport. The Eagles football program, for example, now funds 60 out of a possible 63 Division I Football Championship Subdivision scholarships, totaling \$1.4 million. This fall, the football team is playing a full conference schedule against eight MEAC opponents.



## WENDELL DAVIS / Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance /

Wendell M. Davis has been named NCCU's vice chancellor for administration and finance — the university's chief financial officer. He started June 1.

Before coming to NCCU, Davis was deputy county manager of Durham County, a post he had held since 1999. As the county's second-ranking administrator, he oversaw daily operations in general administration, planning and development, public safety and human services. Since 2005, he also has been an adjunct professor of public administration at NCCU.

A native of Halifax County, Davis graduated from NCCU in 1987 with two degrees, Bachelor of Science with a major in geography and Bachelor of Arts with



a major in sociology. He subsequently earned a master's in urban planning from the University of Illinois and an M.B.A. from South-eastern University of Washington, D.C. He is also a graduate of the

**"HAVING A HAND IN  
EDUCATING THE NEXT  
GENERATION OF EAGLES  
IS HUMBLING."**

— WENDELL M. DAVIS

county administration course at the UNC Institute of Government and of the Public Executive Leadership Academy (PELA) at the UNC School of Government.

"We're delighted that Wendell Davis has accepted our invitation to join the NCCU leadership team," Chancellor Charlie Nelms said. "His experience, passion and commitment will help us as we strive to make this

university great."

"Having a hand in educating the next generation of Eagles is humbling," Davis said. "We are living in an era of considerable economic constraints as we engage the challenge of educating the next generation of business, industry and political leaders. I'm hopeful that my work will add value to the NCCU family in meeting these challenges."



## D. KEITH PIGUES / Dean, School of Business /

D. Keith Pignes, a business executive, author and teacher, has been named dean of the NCCU School of Business.

Pignes comes to the university from PlyGem Industries, a privately held building products company based in Cary, where he was senior vice president and chief marketing officer and member of the company's executive committee. He previously held executive positions at CEMEX, RR Donnelley, ADP and Honeywell International. He also has been an adjunct professor at Kenan-Flagler Business School at UNC-Chapel Hill, where he taught courses in leadership and served as an executive coach for Leadership Immersion, a course on corporate leadership development.

"Our long-term goal is for the business school at NCCU is to be one of the best in the country," Chancellor Charlie Nelms said. "Achieving that goal requires the expertise of a visionary leader who can establish strategic partnerships with the business community. I am confident that Keith Pignes has the passion and expertise needed to do just that."

The author of *Winning with Customers: A Playbook for B2B* (Wiley & Sons, 2010), Pignes is past chairman of the Business Marketing Association's board of directors and a member of the Executive Leadership Council. He began his career in sales and marketing with IBM and Hewlett-Packard, and has more than 25 years of experience in



marketing, strategic planning and sales leadership.

"We're poised for transformative change and innovation," Provost Debbie Thomas said. "With Pignes' appointment, we're shifting away from traditional leadership to one characterized by strong ties to both the corporate and educational sectors."

*Black Enterprise Magazine* named Pignes one of its top executives in marketing and advertising for 2011. *B2B Magazine* recognized him as a leading senior marketing practitioner and a member of "Who's Who in B-to-B" in 2007 and 2010. He received the Frost & Sullivan Marketing Lifetime Achievement Award in 2007.

"I look forward to partnering with the business community to increase awareness of the NCCU School of Business and position it as a leading global business school," Pignes said. "This will be exciting."

Pignes received a Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering in 1984 from Christian Brothers University in Memphis, Tenn., and an MBA from UNC's Kenan-Flagler in 1993.

## ONTARIO WOODEN / Dean, University College /



Ontario S. Wooden has been named dean of University College at North Carolina Central University. The College is the campus unit that guides students through their first two years at NCCU, providing academic advising and other support aimed at improving retention, graduation rates and overall student success.

Wooden succeeds Bernice Duffy Johnson, who is now associate vice chancellor for academic affairs. He has been associate dean of University College since 2008. In that role, he managed NCCU's academic advising program.

A native of Albany, Ga., Wooden received his Bachelor of Science degree in early childhood education from Albany State University in his hometown. He earned his master's degree and Ph.D. in higher education administration from Indiana University.

About 3,000 students are typically enrolled in University College at any given time. The College has a team of 40 faculty and staff, including 13 full-time advisors. In addition to academic advising, mentoring and coaching, it oper-

**"WE ARE THE FOUNDATION  
OF EVERYTHING THIS  
UNIVERSITY IS TO BECOME."**

— ONTARIO WOODEN

ates a testing center to aid in course placement.

"We are the foundation of everything this university is to become," Wooden said. An essential part of the College's mission, he said, is to build partnerships with academic departments throughout the university, and to provide freshmen and sophomores with access and exposure to the departments of their majors. "We want them to develop connections and relationships," he said, "and we serve as a bridge to do this."

Before coming to NCCU, Wooden served from 2004 to 2008 as director of an honors program and academic success initiatives at Albany State, his alma mater. Now, he said, students he advised and mentored are beginning their professional lives and earning advanced degrees.

"I see my own story in many of the students who come through here now," he said. "At University College, we see service as central to who we are — and in turn, it's what we do."



## BETTY PIERCE DENNIS / Nursing Department Chair /

Dr. Betty Pierce Dennis, who chaired the Nursing Department at North Carolina Central University from 1999 to 2004, has returned to chair the department once again as it heads into a period of significant expansion in its new, state-of-the-art teaching facility.

Before her return to NCCU, Dennis was a professor of nursing and dean of the Division of Nursing at Dillard University in New Orleans. She was also the director and a professor at the Minority Health and Health Disparities Center, a collaboration between Dillard and Louisiana State University funded by the National Institutes of Health.

Dennis assumed leadership of the department at NCCU as it

has moved into its new building. The \$25 million, 69,000-square-foot facility includes classrooms, a 200-seat auditorium, skill labs with advanced simulation technology and facilities for expanded student services.

Although the new building is welcome, Dennis said, she plans to focus on motivating faculty and students. "Good facilities are great — they make your life easier," she said, "but the real challenge is working with people." The new building will pave the way for enrollment growth in the nursing program, she said, with a goal of elevating the status of the department to a School of Nursing. Such a step requires the approval of the UNC Board of Governors, and the pace of growth will

depend on faculty and clinical resources and budgetary considerations, she said.

Dennis earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from N.C. A&T State University, a Master of Science in medical-surgical administration from Emory University and a Doctor of Public Health from UNC-Chapel Hill. Before she led the NCCU nursing program from 1999 to 2004, she held associate professorships at both NCCU and UNC — Charlotte. She is an Army veteran, having served in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps, where she attained the rank of captain. She also has extensive international experience, as a teacher in Moshi, Tanzania, at Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre School of Nursing, and as



a consultant and staff member at the Ithusheng Community Health Centre in Tzaneen, South Africa. Working with the International Council of Nurses, she contributed to the development of a nursing documentation tool for international use.

She has written extensively for academic publications. Her research interests are primarily in community-based interventions supported by participatory models, global health issues affected by nursing education and nursing care, and the ethics of health care and health care delivery.

## 3 from NCCU Chosen for International Fellowship

Three members of the faculty and staff of North Carolina Central University have been selected as fellows to the State University of New York (SUNY) Center for Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) Institute. They will work with teams from universities in Europe and Africa to create and team-teach a course in jazz for students on their respective campuses.

Leading the NCCU team will be Lenora Z. Helm, a music professor who is also an accomplished jazz performer. She is joined by Emmanuel Oritsejafor, director of the Office of International Studies, and Dan Reis, multimedia designer in the Center for Teaching and Learning. The COIL Institute is a three-year project funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. The NCCU team's proposal was one of 22 chosen from more than 40 applications submitted, and the only one chosen from a historically black college or university.

The NCCU COIL fellows will partner with the University of South Africa in Pretoria and the Royal Academy of Music in Aarhus, Denmark. The fellows will work with peers at their partner institutions to create a course blending in-class and online delivery. Helm, Reis and Oritsejafor will take part in a three-day discipline-specific workshop at SUNY Global Center in New York City this fall and an eight-week online course on globally networked learning starting in

the fall. They and their international partners will teach their course during the 2012 calendar year.

Helm said the course will embody jazz music appreciation, jazz history, and the influences of politics, language and commerce on the lives of jazz artists. The class that results will be tailored to the needs of each campus. The University of South Africa, Helm said, is primarily an online school that is just starting a jazz division, and the NCCU team will act as a liaison and mentor to help build the program. The focus at the Danish university is more on musical performance.

"We're the experts in jazz, and we'll essentially be the senior partner," Helm said, "but we get a great benefit out of it. Many of our students have limited financial resources and don't have the opportunity to study abroad. This will give them a study-abroad experience. Whether by physical travel or through the portal of this class, they'll be able to experience the culture of those other countries."

LENORA Z. HELM





# Doctoral Program Planned in Biosciences

BY ROB WATERS



**T**he UNC Board of Governors gave NCCU the green light this spring to plan a doctoral program in integrated biosciences. If the planning proceeds on schedule, the program would accept its first students in fall 2012 and could award its first doctor of philosophy (Ph.D.) degrees four years later. They would be the first Ph.D.s awarded by the university in more than 50 years.

According to NCCU's proposal, the interdisciplinary doctorate would be offered on two tracks, biomedical sciences and pharmaceutical sciences. The program would be housed in the College of Science and Technology, and would draw on the resources of NCCU's Julius L. Chambers Biomedical/Biotechnology Research Institute (BBRI), the Biomanufacturing Research Institute and Technology Enterprise (BRITE) and the School of Library and Information Sciences. The curriculum will include offerings from the life sciences, physical sciences, computation and information sciences, pharmaceutical sciences and mathematics.

The decision to offer a Ph.D. in these areas reflects NCCU's growing research capacity in health disparities and drug discovery, said Hazell Reed, vice chancellor for research and economic development. "That's where our strengths are," he said, "We have the faculty in place to do it, and we have state-of-the-art research and laboratory facilities. We're determined to build a very, very strong program in integrated biosciences that is competitive with any in the country."

Research involving health disparities — the gaps between the health status of the nation's racial and ethnic minorities compared with the population as a whole — has been explicitly part of the mission of BBRI since it opened in 1999, and a key focus of other NCCU science and public health programs for decades.

NCCU expects the program to reach an enrollment of about 20 full-time students in its fourth year of operation, and to graduate about five per year. An additional aim of the program is to expand the number of minority scientists, particularly African-Americans, in biomedical research. A recent report by the National Science

Foundation noted that African-Americans make up about 12 percent of the U.S. population, but account for only 3 percent of the work force of scientists and engineers.

"We want good students, period, without regard to race or ethnicity," Reed said, "but NCCU has a commitment to drawing more minorities and women into the STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) disciplines. We want to ensure that we have a diverse student body."

NCCU had a doctoral program in the mid-20th century that was short-lived but historically significant. From 1955 to 1964, five people earned the Ph.D. from the institution then known as North Carolina College at Durham, all in the field of education. The degree received in 1955 by Walter M. Brown, a future dean of the NCCU School of Education, was the first Ph.D. awarded by a historically black college or university in the United States. As of the late 1960s, North Carolina College and Howard University were the only black institutions to have awarded the degree.

Jerry Gershenhorn, associate professor of history at NCCU, wrote about the early Ph.D. program in a 2005 article titled

"Stalling Integration: The Ruse, Rise and Demise of North Carolina College's Doctoral Program in Education, 1951-1962," published in the *North Carolina Historical Review*. As the title indicates, the program was thoroughly enmeshed in the racial politics of the era.

Gershenhorn makes clear that the Ph.D. program was essentially imposed on NCC in 1951 by officials at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. Many black leaders attacked it as a transparent attempt to exclude qualified black students from pursuing higher degrees at UNC and to generally delay integration of higher education throughout the state. NCC President Alfonso Elder opposed it as well, saying that the college's facilities were inadequate to support the Ph.D. and that it diverted resources from more urgent needs.

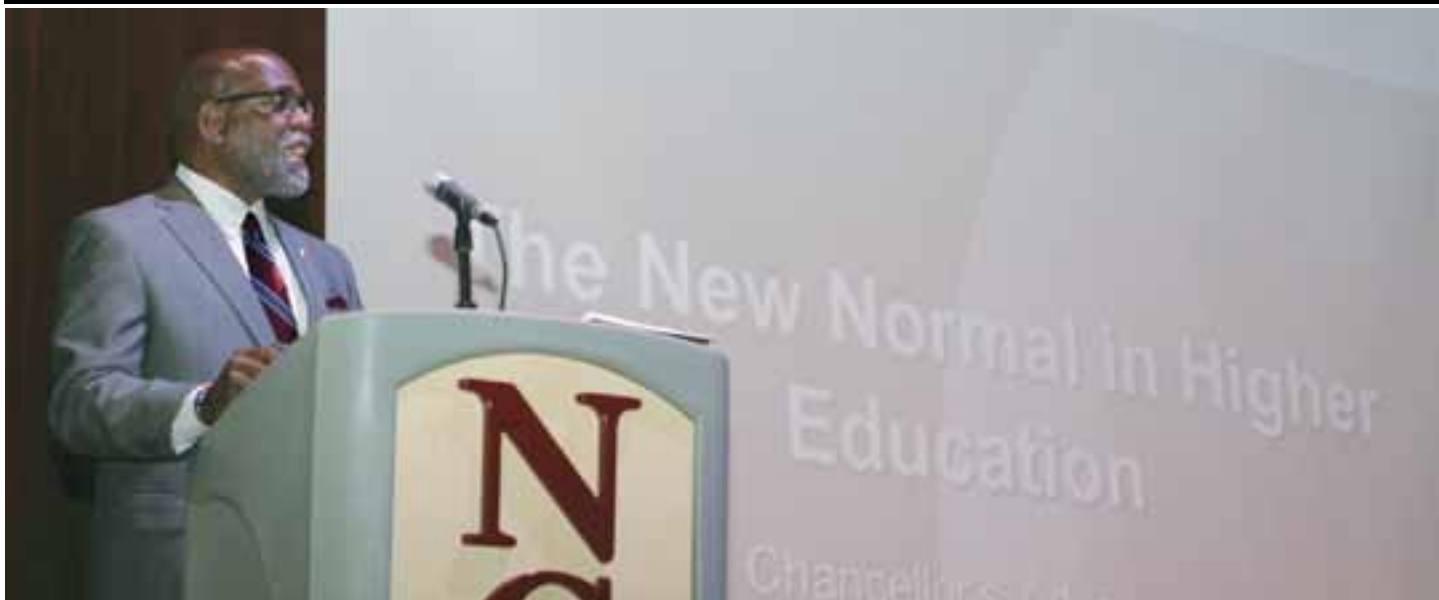
"Elder sought to make the best of the situation and ensure adequate funding when he realized that the Ph.D. program was a fait accompli," Gershenhorn wrote. From all accounts, the program was rigorous. A dozen UNC professors joined the North Carolina College faculty in advising and teaching the doctoral students. But Elder's reservations persisted. In 1961, when he was the sole African-American member of a state commission on higher education set up by Gov. Terry Sanford, he recommended that the program be discontinued, and the commission agreed.

Half a century later, as a much-changed North Carolina Central University prepares to launch a Ph.D. program, there are no doubts about readiness or the adequacy of resources. The labs and teaching facilities are new and top-of-the-line. The faculty is widely respected for its groundbreaking work in health disparities research, cancer research and drug development.

"The whole political and social context is different," Gershenhorn said in a recent interview. "NCCU is becoming an important player in scientific research."

In the 1950s, he noted, black influence was severely limited. Poll taxes, literacy tests and other obstacles restricted the number of black voters, and black colleges had no influence in the state legislature. "The biggest difference," he said, "is political."





# The New Normal

BY CHARLIE NELMS

**A**ugust 1 marked my fourth anniversary as chancellor of North Carolina Central University. I used the occasion to reflect on whether I've done what I said I would do in an effort to move the university forward. Although you may disagree, I believe I have kept faith with the promises I made when I was interviewed for this job and the commitments I made in my installation remarks.

In my installation address, I pledged more financial assistance to graduate students, and we did that. I said we would establish the position of a vice chancellor of research to help exploit the potential for synergy across BBRI and BRITE and the various colleges and schools. We did that, and NCCU received the largest sponsored research grant in our history, in collaboration with UNC-Chapel Hill.

That grant may never have happened if researchers had not collaborated across the silos and then reached out to our neighbor institution. That's what made the difference and that is our way forward. We came together, and look what happened.

I said we would develop a Ph.D. program in the biosciences, and we're doing it (see article, Page 10). The last time we awarded a Ph.D. degree on this campus was 1964.

And I promised that we would improve the quality of service throughout the university. Since the inception of the Quality Service Initiative in 2008, we have conducted training all over campus, and lately I receive many more positive than negative comments regarding our service.

I also stated from the beginning that we must raise expectations. Since I've been here, we've raised admissions standards twice. And we're in the process of raising progression standards such that by fall 2012, the GPA standard for remaining enrolled will rise to 2.0. In the long term, raising the bar for continued academic standing will increase the academic competitiveness and attractiveness of the university.

Likewise, the standards by which we accord Latin honors will be raised. Recently, the Academic Planning Council, the Faculty Senate, the Deans' Council, and the Chancellor's Cabinet approved the following changes beginning in fall 2012:

To graduate with cum laude honors, students must have a GPA between 3.2 and 3.499; magna cum laude—3.5 to 3.799; and summa cum laude—3.8 to 4.0. Research tells us we get what we expect. So we're expecting more.

But as I said when I joined the NCCU community in 2007, we can't just lay on expectations without providing the kinds of programs required to ensure student success. That's what we've attempted to do with the University College and a host of programs aimed at improving student life. The Centennial Scholars, the Annie Day Shepard Scholars, and the First-in-Flight programs are just a few of those intended to enhance the college experience and increase retention and graduation. Other initiatives include enhancing the Honors Program, expanding student leadership opportunities and initiating the Intellectual Climate project.

I believe I've kept faith with my promises. We're making good progress, but despite this major investment, the persistence rate is still below our goal of 80 percent. Our six-year graduation rate is



not where it should be either. While I'm sure there are extenuating circumstances, those explanations are not acceptable to me, to the NCCU Board of Trustees or to many of our stakeholders.

While it is important to establish concrete goals, objectives and success metrics, Harold Geneen said it best when he asserted, "I think it is an immutable law in business that words are words, explanations are explanations, promises are promises—but only performance is reality."

## THE NEW NORMAL: WHAT IT MEANS

Based on my four decades of leadership in higher education, I can recall when few people questioned the contributions made by the nations' colleges and universities. While funding was not guaranteed, it certainly did not face the intense scrutiny that it does today. All public entities and agencies find themselves in a dramatically different environment in which to do business. To understand these forces confronting higher education, I've adopted the phrase the New Normal.

The New Normal is characterized by six key factors:

### ■ Demand for greater accountability regarding student learning, retention and graduation

In times past, the focus was on access. Now it is clearly on student success. That is a policy change I can support as long as we do not use a one-size-fits-all approach. At the end of the day, we must be able to demonstrate that students learn and that they graduate.

### ■ Shrinking state and federal funding

In North Carolina, state appropriations for higher education declined by \$414 million this year alone. At NCCU, the cut was approximately \$14 million. This does not include the cuts to state student financial aid. In North Carolina, state financial aid was limited to nine semesters; our students often need 12 to complete their programs.

At the federal level, students will no longer have access to summer Pell Grants. And it is highly unlikely that this change will be rescinded at any time in the future.

Managing this season of budgetary turbulence will require a different level of discipline and focus. Each course taught, dollar spent and initiative launched must be done with the purpose of ensuring that Dr. Shepard's vision is foremost. All operating dollars for equipment and classroom resources must be expended in a way that enhances student success.

We must manage vacant and filled positions judiciously. From this point forward, all vacant positions and lapsed salary dollars will receive a greater degree of scrutiny at the vice chancellor and chancellor level. I will personally review and approve all requests to advertise and hire employees. This is not micro-management; this is ensuring fiscal responsibility and accountability.

### ■ Increasing emphasis on private fundraising

Clearly, well-resourced, private institutions have dominated in philanthropy. Last year, all of U.S. News & World Report's top 10 traditionally white colleges and universities were private, and the

average endowment was more than \$10 billion. All of U.S. News' top 10 historically black colleges and universities were private too, but the average endowment was not much more than \$100 million. That's one percent of the endowment of the top-tier white institutions. Still, we endeavor to place greater emphasis on private investments to help compensate for dwindling public resources.

### ■ Declining public confidence in higher education

Once upon a time, higher education enjoyed one of the most favorable ratings of all public and private entities. But that has changed. According to a recent Pew Research survey, 57 percent of Americans don't think that students receive good value for the money, and 75 percent say it's too expensive.

Let me encourage you to read *Academically Adrift* by Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa. I've extended an invitation to Arum to visit NCCU next spring to lead a discussion on this important topic.

### ■ Growing competition for students, especially from online providers

The University of Phoenix, Strayer University and the University of Maryland's University College are eating our lunch relative to online degree offerings. At present, we offer only seven degree programs online. That's seven out of more than 70. We must increase that number.

### ■ Lack of academic readiness of entering freshmen

Even though we've raised admissions standards, our students are still struggling in the gateway courses in math and science. This is not just an NCCU problem, but we must find a way to address this vexing issue. The answer, I believe, entails more than adding tutors. We must redesign courses and pay greater attention to pedagogy. As the academic profile of our students improves, and we welcome more students who are fully ready for college, I expect to see a lessening of this concern.

## POLICY CHANGES AT ALL LEVELS

That's the big picture of the New Normal. It's permanent, and we are realigning our university to adjust to this new reality. But even as we do this, there also are some short-term factors — some are economic, related to this brutal recession, and some are political — that will significantly affect the way we go about our business in the months ahead. Here are a few:

### ■ The Board of Governors (BOG) has 11 new members appointed by the legislature who have the potential to take the board, and the UNC System, in new directions.

Many of these members approach the system with a more corporate attitude about results. I have been student-centered my entire career, so the need for the university to become more results-driven, particularly with regard to graduation rates, seems perfectly reasonable to me. We welcome an analysis that compares actual to expected graduation rates given the profile of our students.



# In North Carolina, state appropriations for higher education declined by \$414 million this year alone.

## ■ The BOG has directed the General Administration (GA) to conduct a workload assessment of faculty.

This is a study of workload, not teaching load. GA understands that faculty are engaged in numerous activities outside the classroom. But without adequate data to prove it, General Administration cannot protect the faculty from the imposition of even higher teaching assignments by the BOG or the legislature.

## ■ Former UNC – Charlotte Chancellor James Woodward will deliver a study regarding unnecessary program duplication across campuses in the system late this fall.

Efforts to reduce unnecessary duplication could have a discernable impact on HBCUs in general and NCCU in particular, primarily because of our proximity to two large public research universities.

## ■ Budget reductions and reversions

Over the past decade, NCCU budget reductions and reversions exceed \$45 million. We have given up all of our vacant positions. Now, we're cutting to the core. NCCU is faced with eliminating 58 faculty positions, 43 support personnel as well as cutting back on equipment, library materials and building maintenance.

## ■ How we plan to thrive in the New Normal

With \$14 million less than we had last year, we cannot be the same university. We have to change the way we do business to survive and thrive in this new economic environment.

## ■ Ensure greater efficiency and effectiveness in all university operations.

It takes too many steps and too much time to complete some of the most basic functions. All across campus, many are duplicating efforts. I have directed Vice Chancellor Wendell Davis to convene a work group to review all university administrative operations and to recommend measures for increasing efficiency and effectiveness by Dec. 31. Not doing so is completely unacceptable.

## ■ Evaluate, consolidate and eliminate academic, administrative and support programs and services not central to NCCU's core mission.

Currently, we offer 76 degree programs. If you count the concentrations, that number jumps to 146. We're good at initiating new programs but are not nearly attentive enough to changes in student needs that might cause us to recalibrate our offerings. I have directed Provost Debbie Thomas to work with the deans to conduct a review of all low degree-granting programs and to provide me with a report by December 31. The report will be used to guide decisions about which programs to eliminate, consolidate or expand.

## ■ Hold individuals accountable for student retention and graduation.

Increasing retention and graduation rates is everyone's responsibility, including the chancellor, custodial staff, Police Department, faculty and staff.

## ■ Strictly enforce workload requirements and expectations, for academic and non-academic personnel.

If we don't do this for ourselves in our own way, it will be done for us. I remind you that GA is conducting its review of faculty workload. In the past, each time a new program or service was launched, new personnel were hired. Those days are gone.

## ■ Increase internal communication, collaboration and collegiality.

If we are here for the advancement of the university, it doesn't matter whether we like our co-workers or not. Until they or we find ourselves replaced, we have to work together or this university will not survive in the New Normal.

As chancellor of the university, it is my responsibility to define reality and to propose a way forward. As we commence a new academic year, I challenge all of us to reflect on how we administer, how we teach and how we serve our students. I also challenge us to think seriously about how we communicate and collaborate with each other to ensure greater student success.

I know these are tough times, but I also know that we've had a long acquaintance with adversity. It's when we're tested like this that we show our strength and commitment to a better life for our students. I continue to be optimistic about the future of North Carolina Central University because of the people working on this campus. Together, we can write the next chapter of the university's history, and fill it with stories of excellence and success.

## 2011–12 UNIVERSITY GOALS

- 197,000 student credit hours
- Minimum 80 percent first-to-second year retention rate (BOG requirement)
- Minimum 53 percent six-year graduation rate
- 85 percent NCLEX pass rate in nursing and 100 percent PRAXIS pass rate in teacher education
- 100 percent of all graduates prepared for work or graduate school
- 100 percent compliance with university, UNC and state fiscal policies and procedures
- 100 percent compliance with SACS and specialized accreditation requirements
- 100 percent commitment to student academic success and institutional effectiveness
- Increased private philanthropy and the establishment of strategic partnerships





Ashley Chestang, a 2010 graduate and Theatre major, performs in "Shakin' the Mess Outta Misery" at the National Black Theater Festival in Winston-Salem in August.

# Behind the Curtain

BY MYRA WOOTEN

In 1970, Johnny Alston, fresh out of the Army and newly enrolled at North Carolina Central University, stood in front of the Shepard statue. He was at a crossroads: To his left stood the Fine Arts Building and his first love since high school, the theater; to his right was the William Jones Building, which then housed the School of Law. Alston's experience in the military had sparked an interest in becoming an attorney. He had to choose. He went to the left, and 41 years later, Alston — now Dr. Alston — has been chair of the Department of Theatre for 35 years. He heads a cast of eight in leading one of the oldest liberal arts programs on the campus, and this year the department was invited to perform at the National Black Theatre Festival (NBTF).





Dr. Johnny Alston / Chair



Pamela Bond / Wardrobe Manager



Arthur Reese / Technical Director

## The Theatre Department has long been a shining star on the NCCU campus. In the early days, folklorist and author Zora Neale Hurston served as a faculty member.

Last spring, an ensemble that included NCCU students, alumni and community members opened Shay Youngblood's coming-of-age tale, "Shakin' the Mess Outta Misery," at the University Theater to outstanding reviews. The NBTF invited the troupe to perform at the festival after receiving a video from NCCU technical director Arthur Reese.

The festival, established in 1989 by the late Larry Leon Hamlin, is held every other year in Winston-Salem, attracting an audience of more than 60,000 each time. It began as an outreach arm of the North Carolina Black Repertory Company, the state's first black professional theater company, with the goal of bringing black professional theater companies together to address their shared challenges, which mostly involved funding.

"He wanted to drum up support for black theater," said Sylvia Sprinkle Hamlin, Larry Hamlin's wife. This year the festival staged 123 performances over six days from 34 profes-

sional and two "fringe," or educational, theater groups. "We try and highlight works by and about African-Americans," said Hamlin. "This year our productions included Canadian and South African artists."

"Shakin' the Mess Outta' Misery" is the first play that Alston has directed in three years, but the university has a long history with the festival. Each year, NCCU conducts a play-reading marathon at the festival. Student playwrights from NCCU and other HBCUs submit their work for consideration, and professional artists attending the festival spend a full day reading the productions. The marathon was the brainchild of playwright and former NCCU artist-in-residence Samm-Art Williams.

NCCU and the University of Louisville were the only universities invited to perform. The NCCU group performed four shows, a number that Alston said is unheard of for educational theater. "There were some professional theater companies that only performed once," said Alston.



## A Cast of Characters

Walk into the Department of Theatre and you may feel you are walking into a theatrical production. Nearly every member has a different name. There are “Barney” and “Andy,” also known, respectively, as Martha McAllister, administrative support associate, and Pamela Bonds, wardrobe manager. “Uncle Artie” is Arthur Reese, technical director. Alston is “Uncle Johnny.”

“We are like family,” said Alston, “there is no other way to put it.” But the names don’t stop with the staff.

In the basement of the Farrison–Newton Communications Building, a core group of students assists in designing and building the sets of each production. Collectively they are known as Eagle Tech; individually they are Beast, Samurai, Doomsday, Viper, Shinobi and Shena Queen of the Jungle. Their names are bestowed on them by Reese, based on their work style. Latisha Casey is Shena Queen of the Jungle. Reese admires her work ethic. “She shows up. I don’t have to chase her down.”

Members of the Eagle Tech crew do more than just bring NCCU productions to life. They also work as stagehands at the Durham Performing Arts Center, the RBC Center, Joel Coliseum and the NBTF festival. Reese has 17 students in total, and a core group of eight that he relies on.

Reese has a long history in theater from both the technical and performance sides. His theater experiences have taken him from Chicago State University to Bermuda and finally North Carolina. But never before, he said, has he been a part of a department so focused on both student success and on introducing the arts to the general public.

“There has always been snobbishness against black theater or ‘mama on the couch’ kind of plays,” he said. “A person may come to see a play because it is funny,” said Reese, “but the way that the world is, letting people laugh and forget is not a bad thing.” He said he fell in love with theater after performing in “Fiddler on the Roof” in high school. But the technical side, creating a different world, has always fascinated him.

Reese’s partner in creation is Jim Nuss, the facility maintenance technician and theatrical mad scientist known to nearly all simply as Nuss. You’ll find him in a back room of the theater storage area, surrounded by potions, props and pieces of previous productions. Nuss is at home among the harsh fumes of epoxy, broken chair parts and unidentifiable objects that at some point helped bring a production to life. He is directly responsible for the 10-foot mountain made from old ceiling tiles used in the production of “Slapping the Hand of God,” and the rain that drenched the characters on stage during “Ruined.”

Born in Athens, Ga., Nuss describes himself as an old country boy who grew up believing that if you didn’t have it, you made it; if it was broken, you fixed it; if you didn’t know how, you figured it out. He says he was a teenager before he learned that there existed an occupation called plumber, and that you could call one to come unclog your toilet.

A computer programmer by profession, Nuss made his way to North Carolina in 2001, just as the dot-com bubble was bursting. He arrived to find the jobs gone and spent most of the next four years unemployed before taking his first theater side job to occupy his time.

He has worked with nearly every theater company in the Triangle, regardless of their ability to pay. “When the economy goes in the toilet,” he said, “funding for the arts leads the way to the bottom.” He has worked at NCCU for six years and believes that this job and his interactions with students have saved his life. His methodical nature allows him to keep up with the details that can sometimes be forgotten in the excitement of a new production.

“Never take anything of any sentimental or monetary value into a theater,” he warns. “There is a good chance it will be destroyed. Mostly because theater people are focused on the performance, not your grandmother’s handmade lace table runner. It’s my job to focus on the stuff.”

Pamela Bond, wardrobe manager, focuses on the look of each character and the flow the costumes create on the stage. “The colors have to be pleasing to create a flow of color,” she says. “Your eye has to accept what the characters have on so that you can concentrate on the dialogue.” When a character’s outfit is distracting or improperly fitted, Bond calls it “losing lines.”

Bond sews, repurposes and bargain-shops for each of the productions, a process that takes about six weeks from start to finish. For “Shakin’ the Mess Outta Misery,” which was presented on a minimalist set, the characters’ attire was central to their identity. And Bond was charged with finding a way to use color to create a “bold, brash woman” and a “simplistic day worker.” She also had to consider the number of scenes the characters appear in. It is not unusual to have a lead character appear in nearly every scene, and in those instances Bond must design a costume that is versatile. “From a Sunday afternoon with somebody else’s husband to the liquor house, pouring liquor, I have to create a color palette that works as a unit between all the characters,” she said.

The Theatre Department has long been a shining star on the NCCU campus. In the early days, folklorist and author Zora Neale Hurston served as a faculty member. Today the department continues to expose students to experiences that will develop them as capable theater practitioners.

Alston’s model for success is simple: Treat people as responsible adults and make the students the focus of everything that is done.

“We would rather come here and do this every day, more than anything else,” said Alston. “It has been easy to focus on students because there are very few distractions.” And that is not a new thing. Until just a few years ago, the core of the faculty had worked together for more than 20 years. The retirement of four faculty members brought Dr. Asabi, Arthur Reese and two adjunct faculty members into the department, but the remaining four faculty and staff members are the same.



In August, an ensemble that included NCCU students, alumni and community members, performed Shay Youngblood's coming-of-age tale, "Shakin' the Mess Outta Misery," at the National Black Theater Festival to outstanding reviews.



Jim Nuss / Maintenance Technician

## What's Next

Always focused on improvement, the department this summer purchased a new video broadcast system that makes possible recording, archiving and live broadcasts of productions. The most exciting new feature of the system is the video-projection mapping. The system, called Watch Out, utilizes new projection techniques that can turn almost any surface into a dynamic video display — creating a strikingly realistic illusion of physical scenery. Specialized software is used to warp and mask the projected image to make it fit perfectly on

The cast of "Shakin' the Mess Outta Misery," on stage at NBTF in August, from left, Renee Pratt, Kammeran Giggers, Lora D. Tatum, Tempestt Farrar and Charlotte Ward.

irregularly shaped screens. "It will rival any other theater in this area. The system is similar to the projection system at the NASCAR Hall of Fame Museum in Charlotte," said Alston. "The only limitation is your imagination."

Making use of his computer programming background, Nuss will train on the software, which uses infrared video motion detecting. This allows the system to track the location of individual performers and change the video content accordingly.

According to Nuss, this technology would have been perfect for last year's production of "Little Shop of Horrors."

"In the scene where Audrey the flesh-eating plant begins to grow, this technology would have allowed us to have her tentacles spread throughout the entire theater, projected on all the walls," he said

## 2011-2012 Theater Season

At the start of every school year each faculty member brings in a suggested list of productions, and three or four are selected. "The first thing we think about when putting the theater season together," Alston said, "is the students, and whether have they been exposed to every type of theater there is: classical, period, standard Broadway fare and new productions." The 2011-12 theater season is set and includes a fairly large musical that is a collaborative effort between the theater, art and music departments; an opera in partnership with the music department; an experimental drama that will allow the performers to write portions of the play as they rehearse; and a mash-up of two well-known choreopoems to create an entirely new play. Alston is mum on the details, preferring to keep it a secret until the season opens, but he says, "This season will give the students a lot of muscle. It will be controversial, but art is that way and this department is fearless."





An array of noted artists and jazz clinicians have performed and conducted master classes at the NCCU Jazz Festival, which will be in its 22nd year in 2012.



Performers at recent NCCU Jazz Festivals, clockwise from top left: Students Serena Wiley and Andy Paolantonio; Guitarist Marc Davis, 2010 master's graduate; Jordan A. Kane, 2011 graduate; guest artist Roy Hargrove; guest artist Bobby Broom.





# JAZZ

## STUDIES PROGRAM

### UPHOLDS STATE'S

# JAZZ LEGACY

BY LOIS DELOATCH

It's no secret that North Carolina is the birthplace of some of the most recognizable names in jazz — John Coltrane, Thelonious Monk, Lou Donaldson, Nina Simone, Dr. Billy Taylor, Percy Heath and Tal Farlow, to name a few. Under the leadership of Dr. Ira Wiggins, a 1977 NCCU graduate and North Carolina native, the NCCU Jazz Studies Program has played a vital role in upholding the state's rich legacy for more than 30 years.

NCCU's reputation for having one of the best university jazz programs in the country was enhanced at the 2009 Newport Jazz Festival, where hundreds of festival-goers enthusiastically jockeyed for a spot to see the band — an honor usually reserved for big-name professional acts. Jazz impresario George Wein perched near the edge of the Marsalis Music Stage, and he remained there for the ensemble's entire performance, even



Bassist Ameen Saleem, '01, now performs with Roy Hargrove

as internationally renowned acts performed on stages nearby. One year earlier, a standing-room-only crowd at the International Association for Jazz Education (IAJE) Conference in Toronto witnessed

the NCCU Jazz Ensemble's astonishing performance, which drew accolades and praise from a host of master musicians. In 1997, the group performed at the White House twice at the invitation of President and Mrs. Clinton.

It has been a long and sometimes challenging journey for the program to reach its current place of distinction. Launched in 1976 by legendary jazz saxophonist Donald Byrd, the program experienced ups and downs during its early years. Wiggins recalls that in 1987, during his second semester as an instructor at NCCU, "A very renowned jazz musician/educator told me that I was fooling myself trying to build a serious jazz studies program at an HBCU."

Since 1986, the program has grown from seven students and a single jazz major into a comprehensive discipline. Its performing groups include two standard

## Jazz Studies Program

### HIGHLIGHTS | TIMELINE:

**1990** | First NCCU Jazz Festival.

**1995** | First CD Recording, Central Visions

**1996** | Performances in Montreux, Switzerland, and Paris

**1997** | Performances in Montreux, Switzerland, and Vienne, France

▶ Timeline continues



big bands of 18 to 22 students each; four combos, each with six to 10 students; a guitar ensemble; and a 14-member Vocal Jazz Ensemble. Many participants are jazz studies majors, but others are music education majors and non-music majors. To qualify for the performing groups, all students must audition. The curriculum has been revised over the years to reflect trends in jazz performance and music education. The program is flourishing and graduated its first Master of Music in Jazz Studies in 2010.

Wiggins has recruited and assembled a stellar faculty, with a passion and commitment he describes as “outstanding.” Among them are Baron Tymas, the program’s assistant director (guitar), Robert Trowers (trombone), Albert Strong (trumpet), Arnold George (piano and voice), Lenora Zenzalai Helm (voice), Ed Paolantonio (piano), Thomas Taylor (drum set), Brian Horton (saxophone), and Damon Brown (bass). Additionally, Grammy Award-winner Branford Marsalis has been an artist-in-residence since 2005. Marsalis and members of his quartet, Joey Calderazzo, Jeff “Tain” Watts, and Eric Revis, provide NCCU students with the opportunity to learn from and work with musicians who are among the best in the world. Marsalis and Calderazzo have been committed instructors, advocates and mentors for NCCU students.

Faculty draw on their experience as teachers and working musicians to offer students practical and academically based instruction and performance opportunities, preparing them for careers as school and college educators, professional performers and recording artists.

Facilities and resources to support the program have grown significantly since the program began, under the leadership of several chancellors. Extensive renovations and the addition to the B.N. Duke Auditorium were completed in 2004. The facility now includes state-of-the-art rehearsal, performance and studio space.

## NCCU JAZZ STUDIES PROGRAM RECORDINGS

Central Visions	1995
Beyond The Horizon	1999
Central Standard Time	2001
Blues and the Verdant Green	2005
Yesterdays and Forever	2010
Arrival	2010
Slightly Blued	2010

WNCU 90.7 FM also has been a big factor in the program’s success. One of the very few radio stations in the country to devote the majority of its programming to jazz, WNCU provides resources and opportunities that complement the students’ academic curriculum. The station’s extensive collection of recordings is available for research and study, exposing students to artists and recordings they might not otherwise discover.

The Friends of the Jazz Studies Program are “a very important group” says Wiggins. Spearheaded by Donald Baker, Julie King, Elaine “Mama Jazz” Crovitz,

Dolly and Steve Bromberg, and Freeman and Willie Ledbetter, the Friends provide financial contributions, advocacy and other support. They also serve as ambassadors and liaisons between the program and the community, assisting with marketing and publicity for events and activities.

Wiggins’ wife, Joyce Saunders Wiggins, also a 1977 graduate, has been an avid booster from the very beginning. “Joyce is responsible for keeping me focused and motivated,” Ira Wiggins says. A musician herself, she understands the necessity of high performance standards and quality. She also spearheaded the documentation of the jazz program through the cataloguing of articles, letters, audio and video recordings. “She and Clark Terry, the great trumpeter, made me aware of the importance of documentation,” Wiggins says.

As he nears his 25th anniversary at NCCU, Wiggins contemplates what the program has meant to NCCU students, alumni, the campus and broader community. “In 2012, the NCCU Jazz Festival will be in its 22nd year and the Fall Guest Artist series will begin its 12th year,” he says. An array of noted artists and jazz clinicians have performed and conducted master classes. The impressive list includes Jimmy Heath, James Moody, Slide Hampton, Geri Allen, Nnenna Freelon, Frank Foster, Louie Bellson, Fred Wesley, Grady Tate, Clark Terry, Branford Marsalis, Ellis Marsalis, Christian McBride and Roy Hargrove.

NCCU continues to help shape jazz today. Alumni have worked and performed with Betty Carter, Houston Person, Kenny Burrell, Roy Hargrove and

# Jazz Studies Program

## HIGHLIGHTS | TIMELINE:

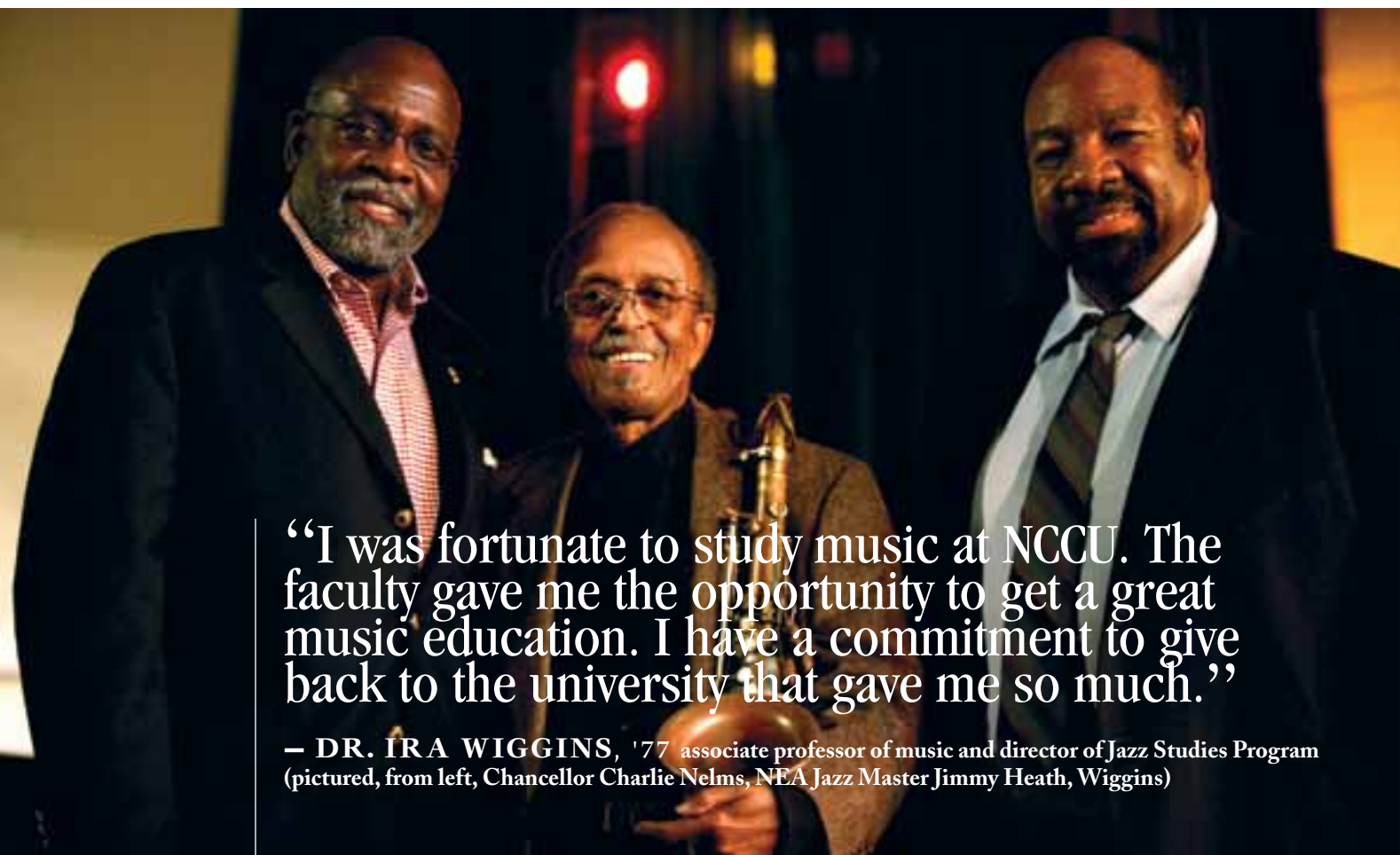
**1997** | Two White House Performances

**2000** | First NCCU Fall Guest Artist Series

**2006** | Jazz Ensemble performs a tribute in honor of Dr. Billy Taylor in Kansas City.

**2008** | Big Band and Vocal Jazz Ensembles perform at IAJE Conference in Toronto.





“I was fortunate to study music at NCCU. The faculty gave me the opportunity to get a great music education. I have a commitment to give back to the university that gave me so much.”

— **DR. IRA WIGGINS**, '77 associate professor of music and director of Jazz Studies Program (pictured, from left, Chancellor Charlie Nelms, NEA Jazz Master Jimmy Heath, Wiggins)

others. Students from the program have won Outstanding Performance awards in *DownBeat*, the noted jazz magazine. A partial list of performing jazz program alumni includes Grady Tate '59, Leon Pendarvis '66, Stanley Baird '72, Harold Greene '93, Brian Miller, Chip Crawford, Eve Cornelius '99, Ameen Saleem '01, LeRoy Barley '01, Brian Horton, Damon Brown '93, Alvin Atkinson '95, Jonovan Cooper '98, Eve Cornelius '99, Iajhi Hampden '01, Jeremy Clemons '01, Albert Strong '03, Adia Ledbetter '07, Mavis Poole '07, Ryan Hanseler '10, Bluford Thompson '10, and Chris Hankins '10. (Hanseler, Thompson and Hankins all earned the Master of Music degree a year ago.)

NCCU's program is special and distinct indeed. Of 108 public and private historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs), fewer than 10 offer degrees in jazz studies, and only NCCU and Howard offer a master's-level program.

“In many U.S. universities, jazz is not viewed as a worthy academic discipline,” Wiggins says. “But jazz courses and degrees flourish in major, non-HBCU universities throughout the United States, Europe, and Japan. It just makes sense for HBCUs to play a vital role in the preservation and perpetuation of an art form that owes its development and origin to the African-American experience.”

Asked why he has devoted his career to jazz studies at NCCU, Wiggins responds,

“I was very fortunate to study music at NCCU. With my background as an R&B guitarist in my brother's band, with no formal training or high school band experience, most universities would have denied my pursuit. The faculty and university gave me the opportunity to obtain a great music education. I have a commitment to give back to an institution that gave me so much. It's my obligation.”

**LOIS DELOATCH** is NCCU's vice chancellor for institutional advancement. She also is a professional singer and songwriter, specializing in jazz, blues, and spirituals, and a longtime supporter of NCCU's jazz studies program.

**2009** | Vocal Jazz Ensemble performs at Notre Dame Jazz Festival in South Bend, Ind.  
| Jazz Ensemble performs at Newport Jazz Festival with Branford Marsalis and Joey Calderazzo  
| Jazz Ensemble performs at Detroit Jazz Festival

**2010** | Vocal Jazz Ensemble performs at New York City Jazz Festival

**2010** | Jazz Ensemble receives 1st place awards for Big Band and Combo with outstanding soloist awards, Best Rhythm Section, Best Trumpet Section, and Best Saxophone Section at the Villanova Jazz Festival, Pa.



## CARLTON WILSON CONFRONTS THE CHALLENGE OF STAGING A DUAL GRADUATION

BY ROB WATERS

# The Commencement Conductor

# IT

is about 6:15 a.m. on a muggy Saturday morning in May. The baccalaureate commencement program is scheduled to start at 8, and the field of O'Kelly-Riddick Stadium swarms with workers setting up the stage, arranging flowers and potted plants, and fine-tuning the sound system. Rain had been forecast — accurately — overnight, causing some tasks to be put off till the morning, so there is additional urgency to the bustle.

Among the workers is a slender man of medium height and age, clad in khaki shorts, an NCCU T-shirt and a matching maroon baseball cap. He gives every appearance of being just another member of the work crew as he arranges skirts on the tables and wipes the chairs on the podium.

But in fact, the man is Carlton Wilson, dean of the College of Liberal Arts, associate professor of history and, since 2005, the director of NCCU's convocations and commencement ceremonies. Soon he will have to scurry over to Pearson Cafeteria, where faculty members and university administrators are getting ready for com-

mencement. He'll replace the T-shirt and cap with his academic regalia.

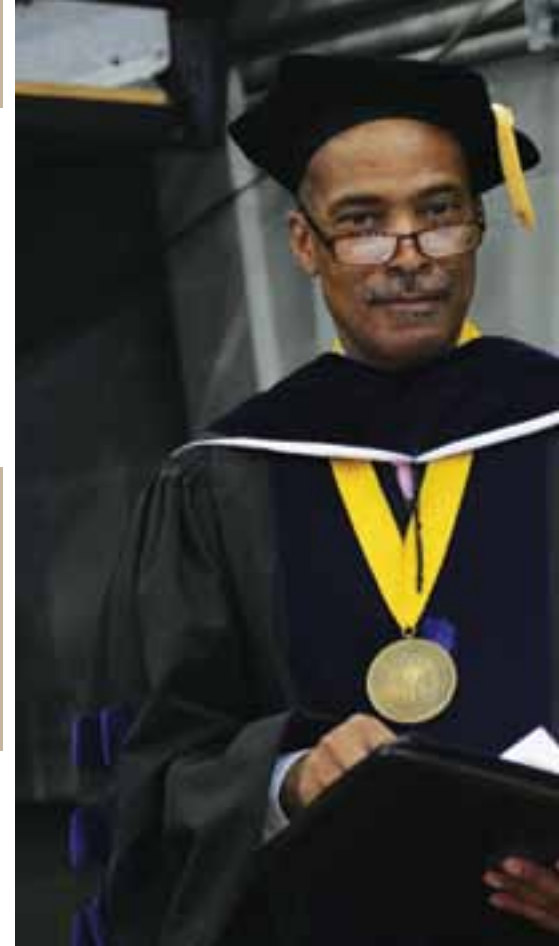
But first, he needs to make sure the stage is properly prepared. This is a day of celebration for the graduates and their guests, and he wants them to enjoy it.

### THE DECISION TO DIVIDE

The experience of May 2010 convinced university officials that the time had come to split up the spring commencement ceremony. That commencement dragged on for nearly four scorching hours, with more than half of that time devoted to calling the names and handing out diplomas one by one to more than 900 recipients of undergraduate, graduate and professional degrees. Meanwhile, shoe soles melted and feet blistered on the artificial turf of O'Kelly-Riddick Stadium. On the field and in the stands, dozens of people needed treatment for heat exposure.

"The weather was the primary issue, but the ceremony was also simply too long," Wilson said. "We discussed eliminating the calling of names and the walk across the stage, but it was clear that calling names was too important to our students. Splitting the ceremony was the only reasonable alternative."

A new schedule took shape. The baccalaureate ceremony would be at the usual time and place, Saturday morning (May 14) in the stadium. The new,




separate ceremony for graduate and law students would take place one day earlier — Friday afternoon in McDougald-McLendon Gymnasium.

Wilson first gathered the two dozen members of his commencement planning committee in February. The committee members met every two weeks at first, and weekly for the last month or so. Over the years, Wilson has developed a system that seems to work: Instead of dividing the work among subcommittees, he recruits committee members who know how to get things done, and he gives them individual assignments. At each meeting, they report on their progress and, if necessary, Wilson peppers them with questions.

His demeanor is low-key. He is unfailingly courteous and soft-spoken. And he doesn't miss a thing. Some excerpts and observations from a meeting of the committee in April:

- *Feeding the band and choir:* He notes that the quoted cost of the post-commencement brunch has gone up 60 percent from 2010 and asks if it can be negotiated down. He notes that students from the band, choir and brass





As commencement director, Wilson functions much like the conductor of a symphony orchestra. Most of the hard work occurs beforehand — planning, rehearsing, anticipating potential problems so that surprises are few.

ensemble who will take part in commencement will be staying on campus for a few days after school ends and they need to eat. “We need to pay for their food through Saturday morning, and we can’t use state funds for that. If we can get the brunch cost down, we can apply what we save toward this.”

• *Anticipating problems on Friday — the day of the graduate ceremony, rehearsal day for the undergrads:* “The more time you spend on the rehearsal in the morning, the more chaotic it will be to get back for the real deal for the graduate ceremony. It’ll be a rush — another burden on you and your staff. Keep that in mind.”

• *Another possible problem with the graduate ceremony:* “We’re taking a gamble by not requiring tickets at the gym and having open seating. We don’t know how many people will show up. But if we required tickets, each graduate would get only three or four.”

• *Attire for student volunteer guides at the stadium on Saturday:* “It’s OK if they wear polo shirts. We can’t transform O’Kelly–Riddick into the Dur-

ham Performing Arts Center, so let’s stop trying.”

And so it goes, for more than an hour, dealing with details regarding the printed program, whether to add one more choir selection to the graduate ceremony, and the scramble to move the podium from the gym to the stadium after the Friday ceremony. The meeting ends with one final pep talk: “The dual ceremony is going to be difficult — it’ll be like playing the No. 1 team on their home field. It’s going to be a hard game. And please remember, our students and their guests are our No. 1 priority.”

### ‘THAT WAS TERRIBLE!’

“When we split the ceremonies,” Wilson said, “the biggest adjustment was the need to create two complete venues as much as possible, and minimize the need to move materials from the gym to the stadium overnight. The plan was to only move flowers, potted plants and the podium.”

Wilson overlooked nothing, and certainly not stagecraft. It was he who realized that O’Kelly–Riddick Stadium would need a different layout this year. In 2010, the seating for the 900-plus graduates nearly filled the field, and the podium was nearly in the end zone. This year, for the benefit of viewers in the stands, the podium would be placed around the 20-yard line, and the seats for the 550 undergraduates spaced a little bit farther apart.

On Thursday, May 12 — a day before the graduate ceremony — Wilson has a final meeting with the 17 faculty marshals who will be taking part in the ceremonies. Their job is to organize the procession and recession, escort the students to the platform to receive their degrees, and generally act as troubleshooters.

The marshals will be organizing the procession routine at rehearsals later that day for the graduate students and Friday morning for the undergraduates. Wilson tells them to convey this essential message: “Explain to them, ‘That was terrible!’ That’ll get their attention, and they’ll do much better at the live event.”

The biggest concern is the Saturday morning weather. The weekend is shaping up as a wet one. There is a backup plan to hold the ceremony in the gym, but it would be a last resort. It would exclude a lot of friends and relatives from the live ceremony, forcing them to settle for a video feed at one of several campus auditoriums. If it’s simply rainy, Wilson explains, then it’s best to carry on outdoors. A thunderstorm, on the other hand, would be dangerous. A final decision can be made as late as 4 or 5 a.m. Saturday.

### WITHOUT A HITCH

So, how did it go? Well, unless you knew in advance that this was the first-ever split commencement, you would never have guessed. Both ceremonies went off with barely a hiccup.

As commencement director, Wilson functions much like the conductor of a symphony orchestra. Most of the hard work occurs beforehand — planning, rehearsing, anticipating potential problems so that surprises are few.

Even so, the conductor must be present to direct the performance. And that was the case with Maestro Wilson. Most of the time during both ceremonies, he stood unobtrusively off to the side of the podium, following the script, giving the cues, keeping things moving.

At the Friday afternoon ceremony in the gym, the university awarded 264 graduate degrees and 170 law degrees. The gym was nearly full, but no one had to be turned away. Dr. Norman B. Anderson, Class of 1977, chief executive officer of the American Psychological Association, gave the commencement address, urging the graduates to adopt a mindset that lets them embrace challenge, accept setbacks and, most important, learn from failure. Wilson saw to it that the pace remained brisk, and the Brass Ensemble wrapped matters up with a recessionary march right around the two-hour mark.

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► CONTINUED ON PAGE 51



# NCCU WELCOMES A CIVIL RIGHTS HERO



BY ROB WATERS

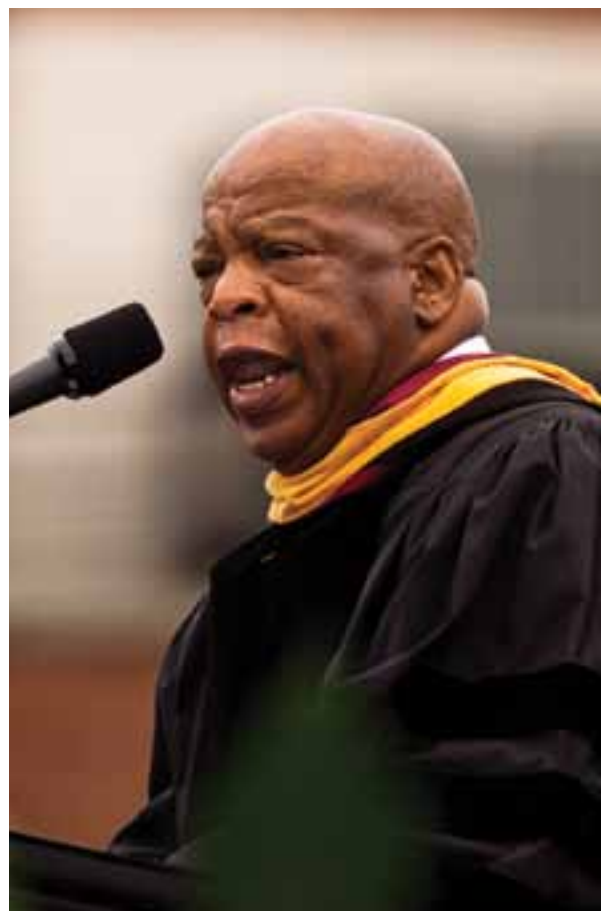
**J**ohn Lewis got a hero's reception when he visited NCCU to deliver the baccalaureate commencement address on May 14. The crowd at O'Kelly-Riddick Stadium gave the famed civil rights leader a standing ovation at the conclusion of the address, and not just for the stirring speech. A second implied message was, "Thank you for a lifetime of leadership and courage."

After the ceremony, as the Georgia congressman made his way across campus accompanied by Chancellor Charlie Nelms and other university officials, he was stopped again and again — for photos, autographs, handshakes and more than a few hugs.

"It must have taken us more than 20 minutes to get back to the dining hall," Nelms said, "and the congressman was personable, patient and approachable every step of the way."

Lewis' role in the civil rights battles of the 1960s was an unusual one. As chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, he planned strategy alongside leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr., A. Philip Randolph and Roy Wilkins. And far more often than these older leaders, he also marched with the movement's infantry, absorbing beatings and dozens of jailings.

He took part in the Freedom Rides, the 1961 effort to compel enforcement of a Supreme Court decision forbidding segregation at interstate bus stations. In 1965, he led 600 peaceful protesters across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Ala., intending to march the 50 miles to Montgomery, the state capital, to demonstrate the need for voting rights in the state. At the end of the bridge, they were clubbed and tear-gassed by about 200 state troopers. The confrontation, soon known as "Bloody Sunday," attracted worldwide news coverage and is widely credited with spurring President Lyndon Johnson to push for passage of the Voting Rights Bill, which became law later that year.







## 2011 SPRING COMMENCEMENT



Lewis, now 71, spoke on the 50th anniversary of the day when a group of Freedom Riders nearly died when their bus was firebombed in Anniston, Ala. Lewis himself was severely beaten on Freedom Rides before and after that date, once in South Carolina and once in Alabama. Eventually, though, the nonviolent commitment to justice and equality carried the day — and that was the heart of Lewis' commencement message.

"We didn't give in," he told the graduates. "And you must not give in. Keep your eyes on the prize."

Lewis, who grew up on a farm in rural Alabama, recalled being jarred and offended in his youth when he encountered the "colored" and "white" signs on visits to the cities of Tuskegee, Montgomery and Birmingham. In 1955, when he was 15, Rosa Parks was arrested in Montgomery for refusing to give up her seat on a bus to a white man. Dr. King led the famed bus boycott that followed.

"I heard about Rosa Parks," Lewis said. "I was inspired by Dr. King. I got into trouble. I got into *good* trouble." And he instructed the graduates to do the same. "Find a way to get in the way. Find a way to get into good trouble."

In his native Alabama, he recalled, African-Americans attempting to register to vote were required to answer impossible and humiliating questions. "We changed that," Lewis said. "We marched. We were beaten on the bridge in Selma. We didn't give

## Lewis, now 71, spoke on the 50th anniversary of the day when a group of Freedom Riders nearly died when their bus was firebombed in Anniston, Ala.

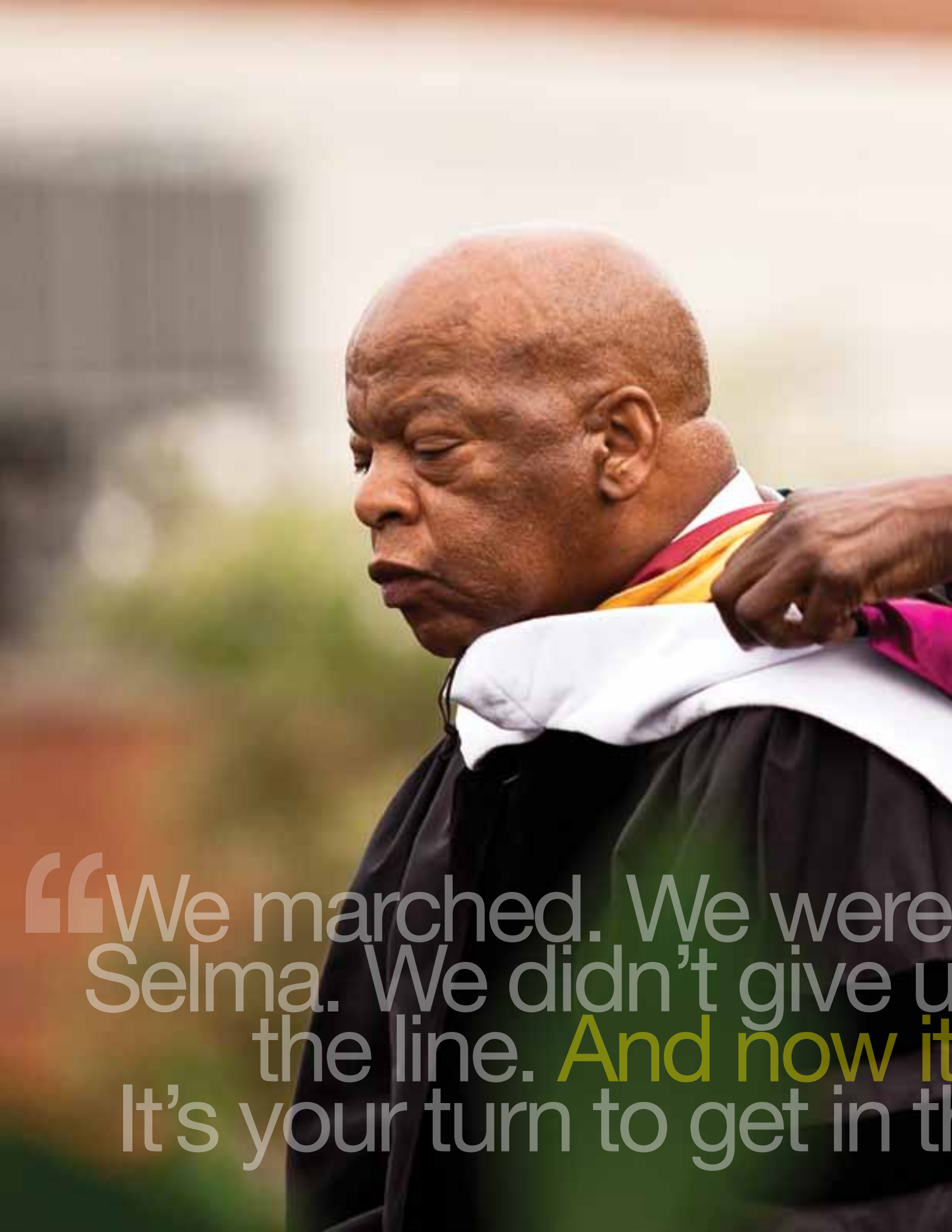
up. We put our bodies on the line." And now, he told the graduates, "It's your time to lead. It's your turn to get in the way."

There is still much work to be done, he said, "to create a society at peace with itself."

Nelms, who has heard more than a few graduation addresses over the years, was impressed. "He connected with the audience better than any commencement speaker I've ever met," he said. "He spoke from the heart — no notes. It was as though he were speaking personally to each person assembled. He's a captivating storyteller, and I think those skills are rooted in his life experiences."

Nelms presented Lewis, who has represented an Atlanta-area district in Congress since 1986, with an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree, saying, "John Lewis, you are an American hero."





“We marched. We were  
Selma. We didn't give up  
the line. And now it  
It's your turn to get in the





beaten on the bridge in  
up. We put our bodies on  
it's your time to lead. ”  
the way.

— JOHN LEWIS, Georgia Congressman

PHOTO BY CHIOKE D. BROWN



# BRITE ST★RS

NCCU'S YOUNG PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES PROGRAM IS ATTRACTING RESEARCH GRANTS, DEVELOPING DRUGS, AND PRODUCING EXTRAORDINARY STUDENTS

BY ROB WATERS AND MYRA WOOTEN



**The Biomanufacturing Research Institute and Technology Enterprise**, better known by its more manageable acronym of BRITE, is hitting its stride.

BRITE is the home of North Carolina Central University's pharmaceutical sciences program. It admitted its first students in 2007 while still housed in the Mary M. Townes Science Building. The award-winning BRITE facility, financed by \$20.1 million from the Golden LEAF Foundation, opened in 2008. Ongoing support from the state and from Golden LEAF, the foundation created to promote economic development with proceeds from North Carolina's share of the national tobacco settlement, has totaled about \$55 million to date, and has been essential in the startup phase.

Now the investment is beginning to pay off. Research grants have begun to flow from the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation and other sources. The drug-discovery pipeline is up and running; BRITE generated two patent applications and five provisional applications in 2010.

And there's another, more important, indicator of success. The heart of BRITE's mission is teaching — providing students with scientific education and technical skills for careers in the pharmaceutical and related industries and in research. That is clearly happening. The program's early graduates are thriving in the workplace and the research lab. And current students are making significant discoveries even before they graduate.

BRITE is an unusual program in many respects, but here are three that stand out:

- *The undergraduate lab module.* Students are required to complete 12 credit hours in the laboratory. In their senior year, they work with a faculty member on a specific project in the biomanufacturing sciences. "Yes, it's expensive," says Dr. Li-An Yeh, director of BRITE, "but it's so useful. It gives our students a competitive advantage. They arrive ready to get to work."
- *A faculty with private-sector experience:* More than two-thirds of the faculty and staff have spent a significant portion of their careers in private industry. They know the ins and outs of the business for which they are training the students.
- *Close ties to industry:* An essential part of producing graduates who get good jobs is to know the job market. A key member of the team is Linda Love, BRITE's industrial re-

lations manager. She builds relationships with companies, especially those in the Triangle, to learn what jobs are out there and what employers are looking for.

The numbers tell the story one way. Of the 21 BRITE students who received the bachelor's degrees from 2008 through spring of 2011, 60 percent are working in biomanufacturing or biotech, and 40 percent are pursuing advanced degrees. Of the 20 recipients of master's degrees, 20 percent are working in those industries and 70 percent are working on advanced degrees.

Another way to tell the story is through the experiences of individual students. Here are nine of them — an extraordinarily varied group. What they have in common are talent and success.



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**MARQUITA LILLY** | MASTER'S PROGRAM, ENTERING SECOND YEAR

Lilly was 9 years old when her dad bought her a microscope. "I've been hooked ever since," she said. She is now in the second year of the master's program at BRITE, on track to graduate in May. Born in Fayetteville, she earned her bachelor's degree at UNC-Pembroke with a double major in biology and chemistry. She then worked for three years as a chemist at Hospira, a pharmaceutical company in Clayton.

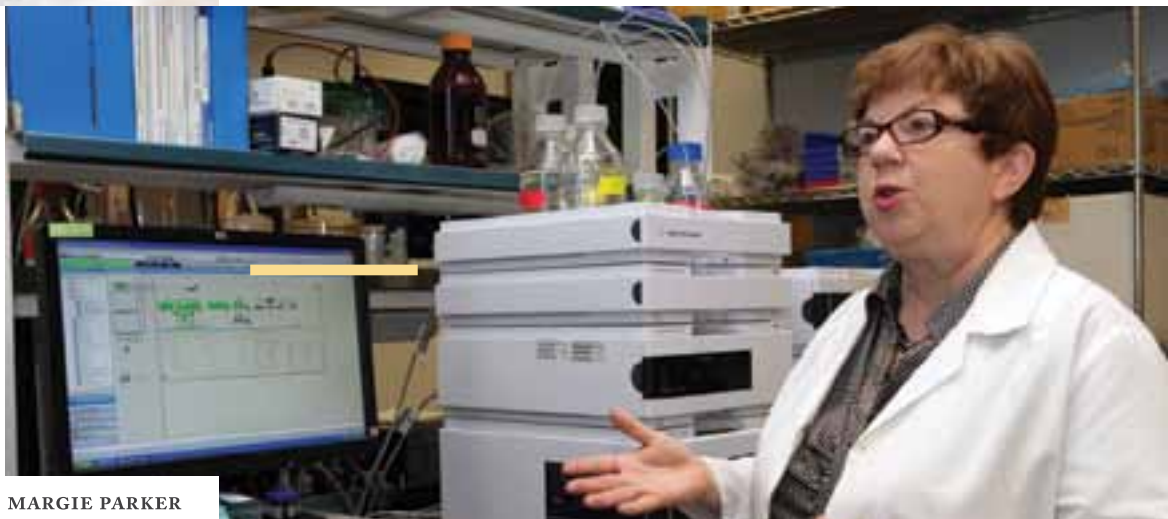
She was drawn to BRITE by the small class size, which she says fosters close collaboration with researchers and professors who have industry experience. "They want you to do well," she said. "They go out of their way to make it happen."

Assistant Professor Liju Yang has been an especially helpful mentor, Lilly said. Yang has a grant from the Army Research Office to study ways to protect military and emergency personnel from anthrax exposure. Under Yang's supervision, Lilly is working on a project to inactivate spores of the anthrax bacteria using carbon nanotubes — extremely tiny tubes formed by carbon atoms. "This research will lead to protection of military and first-line emergency personnel at high risk of anthrax exposure," Lilly said. She and Yang work with a nonlethal strain of anthrax.

Lilly landed a summer 2011 internship at Liquidia Technologies, a company in Research Triangle Park that develops advanced vaccines. "In five years," she said, "I want to be working in research and development at a major pharmaceutical company — after I complete a joint PharmD/Ph.D. program."



MARQUITA LILLY



MARGIE PARKER

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**MARGIE PARKER** | B.S., SUMMA CUM LAUDE, MAY 2011

If you are planning a party, Margie Parker can tell you exactly how many balloons you'll need for a centerpiece. She can also characterize proteins involved in cancer proliferation.

Before Parker came to NCCU, she and her husband, Lowell Parker, owned and operated a party store in Kernersville, N.C. After 15 years, she was ready



for a change. They sold the business and she enrolled at Forsyth Tech in Winston-Salem, where she earned an associate's degree in biotechnology.

But finding a job with just an associate's degree in a struggling economy was tough. So she and her mentor at Forsyth Tech, Russel Read, attended a career fair at NCCU, where they met industrial relations manager Love. "She asked me if I had given any thought to earning my four-year degree, and I told her I was too old to go back to school," said Parker, who was 56 at the time. But Love was persistent and offered a full scholarship. "Knowing that the university was willing to make that type of investment," Parker said, "there is no way I could turn it down."

She arrived at NCCU clearly focused on acquiring the skills needed in biotech manufacturing. That's where BRITE's lab module came in. The requirement that pharm sciences majors earn 12 credit hours in the lab means that for at least two semesters, they're in the lab for about 20 hours a week.

"It's part of the curriculum," Parker said, "a strong transition point between the classroom and the real world."

Under the supervision of Associate Professor Kevin Williams, Parker sharpened her skills at handling proteins. "I work with proteins to determine their structure and function — how they work in the body and interact," she said. "We find out as much as we can about the protein so we can make it interact with other compounds."

Parker graduated in May with a perfect 4.0 GPA and was confident of finding work in the Triangle. Indeed, within a month, she was snapped up by Biogen Idec, a multinational company with a manufacturing plant in Research Triangle Park. And at age 58, she has embarked on a new career.

"It is never too late to make a change," Parker said.

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## MAKENDRA UMSTEAD | B.S., MAY 2011, SUMMA CUM LAUDE

Umstead had plenty to celebrate on graduation day in May. She received her degree with highest honors. She had a 4.0 GPA. She was a Chancellor's Scholar and recipient of the Soaring Eagles scholarship, the Chancellor's Award for Academic Excellence and the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences Academic Excellence award for a senior.

She says her accomplishments are just steppingstones to her ultimate goal and personal mission, finding a cure for breast cancer. She spent the summer as an intern at Merck's research lab in Boston and is now enrolled in a Ph.D. program at Emory University in Atlanta.

The motivation behind her determination is her mother, who was diagnosed with breast cancer when Umstead was in high school.

"Watching her go through chemo, I wanted to do something to help," Umstead said. The first thing she did was earn a scholarship to college. "I wanted to relieve my parents of that burden, and they have always taught me to work hard and do better."

A native of Cary, Umstead is a graduate of Southeast Raleigh High School, noted for its strong science and technology programs. She had plenty of college options — she was accepted at UNC-Chapel Hill, Duke, East Carolina and N.C. State. She chose NCCU because of the warm community she found when she visited the campus. "I love this university, and every chance I get I am recruiting students and telling them why I came to NCCU," she said.

At BRITE, starting in her sophomore year, Umstead worked closely with Assistant Professor Jiahua "Jay" Xie on a variety of plant biology projects. One involved identifying genes involved in developing chlorophyll in a plant called golden pothos. The long-term goal is to identify proteins in plants similar to human proteins that can be used to treat diseases.



MAKENDRA UMSTEAD





KEVIN DAVIS

## KEVIN DAVIS | M.S., MAY 2011, SUMMA CUM LAUDE

Davis thought he wanted to be a schoolteacher. A native of Clinton, N.C., he earned a B.A. in social sciences at Fayetteville State. But after a year in the classroom, he decided it wasn't his career path.

So, it was on to Plan B: pharmacy school or pharmaceutical research. He returned to Fayetteville State for two years of higher-level science courses, then headed up the road to Durham.

"I had heard good things about BRITE," he said.

His master's thesis project, supervised by Associate Professor Kevin Williams, involved a human protein known as PDK1. The protein affects cell survival and growth — including growth of the abnormal, cancerous kind. Much of modern cancer research focuses on finding ways to disrupt the chemical processes within cells that lead to tumor growth and metastasis. Working with Williams, Davis developed tests to identify compounds that react with PDK1. "We're looking for ways to disrupt the overstimulation process," he said.

Davis hoped he would not need to venture outside the Triangle in his job search after graduation. By early summer, he was working as a bioprocess technician in Durham in the labs of Merck — one of Linda Love's "repeat customers."

"There's strong support at NCCU in looking for jobs, and BRITE is especially good with that," he said. "Kevin Williams, Linda Love, Sam Lamson (a senior scientist) — all these guys try to help you out."



JAOUAD MAMOUNI

## JAOUAD MAMOUNI | B.S., MAY 2011, SUMMA CUM LAUDE

Many BRITE students have taken unconventional paths to the NCCU campus. But even among this group, Jaouad Mamouni stands out. Born in Morocco, Mamouni was studying plant biology at Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University when he experienced a life-changing event: He hit the lottery.

No, it wasn't an instant-riches lottery. It was the U.S. State Department's Diversity Visa Lottery — the "green card lottery." Each year, the program offers permanent residency and a path to citizenship to 50,000 immigrants, chosen at random from about 10 million who apply. The only requirement is that they come from a country that is underrepresented in the immigrant pool.

After starting out in New York City, Mamouni soon made his way to North Carolina, where some friends lived. With no more specific plan than getting some education and a job, he enrolled first at Johnston Community College, then at Wake Tech. Along the way, he met another student from Morocco who was majoring in chemistry at NCCU and who spoke highly of the new program getting started at BRITE.

That was in 2007. In May, Mamouni graduated summa cum laude — one of five BRITE students to share in the highest honor. And this fall he is enrolled in the master's program in biomanufacturing at N.C. State University, on a full scholarship.

At NCCU, he conducted research involving biosensors and nanotechnology under the supervision of Dr. Liju Yang. He is full of praise for Yang and the BRITE program. "You get so much hands-on experience," he said. "That's really unusual for undergraduates. And if you get good results, your supervising professor can publish the findings in an academic journal. I had two publications as an undergraduate — and was listed as first author in one and second author in another."



# BRITE

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## MELONY OCHIENG | SENIOR

Ochieng is on track to graduate in May 2012 with a double major in pharmaceutical sciences and chemistry. In research supervised by Darlene K. Taylor, assistant professor of chemistry, Ochieng is developing a method for delivering a breast cancer drug in a way that reduces adverse side effects.

She and Taylor are working with a drug called Fulvestrant, which has been proven effective against a common kind of breast cancer but has unpleasant side

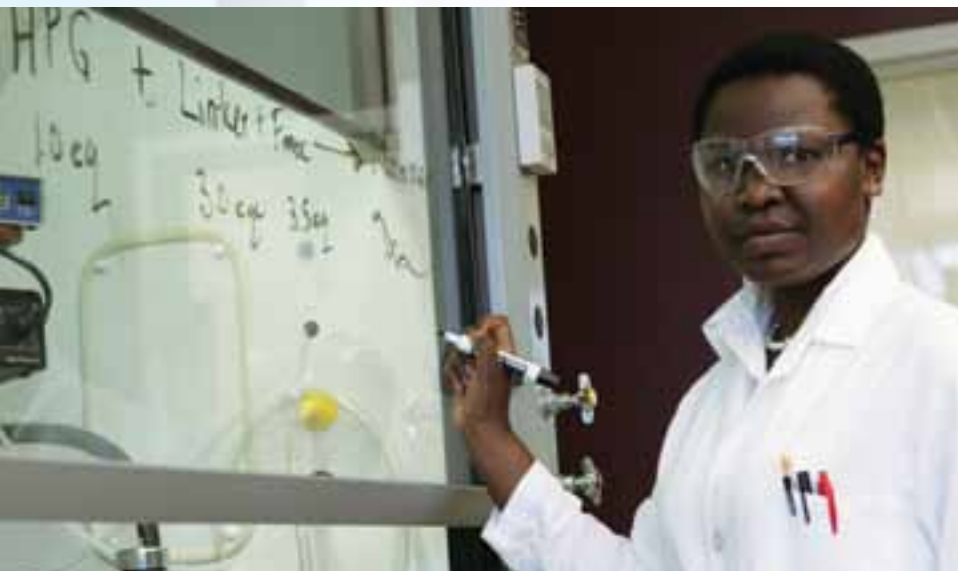
effects. It is normally injected, but is not easily absorbed by the body. Ochieng is developing a way to administer the drug via a polymer delivery system, which will increase solubility and improve absorption. That would allow it to be given in smaller doses with fewer side effects. Ochieng and Taylor have obtained a provisional patent for their system.

"I've been working on this since I was a freshman," said Ochieng, who moved with her family to the United States from Kenya when she was a child. "When I graduate, I want to be able to think on my own, to conduct my own research."

After graduation, Ochieng said she hopes to pursue a Ph.D. in medicinal chemistry. She has worked as a research intern the past three summers, starting at UNC-Chapel Hill after her freshman year. The next summer found her at Adam Mick-

iewicz University in Poznan, Poland. And in 2011, she landed a prestigious internship at the Broad Institute at Harvard and MIT.

NCCU is an ideal place to study science, she said. "At a big research university, undergraduates have a hard time gaining access to the labs. And many smaller colleges don't have the sophisticated equipment we have here. So this is just right — especially if you have a professor like Dr. Taylor who sets the bar so high."



MELONY OCHIENG





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**ANA E. BERGLIND | B.S., MAY 2011, SUMMA CUM LAUDE**

Ana Berglind was another of Linda Love's recruits from the state community college system. The two met when Love was visiting Asheville–Buncombe Tech to promote BRITE.

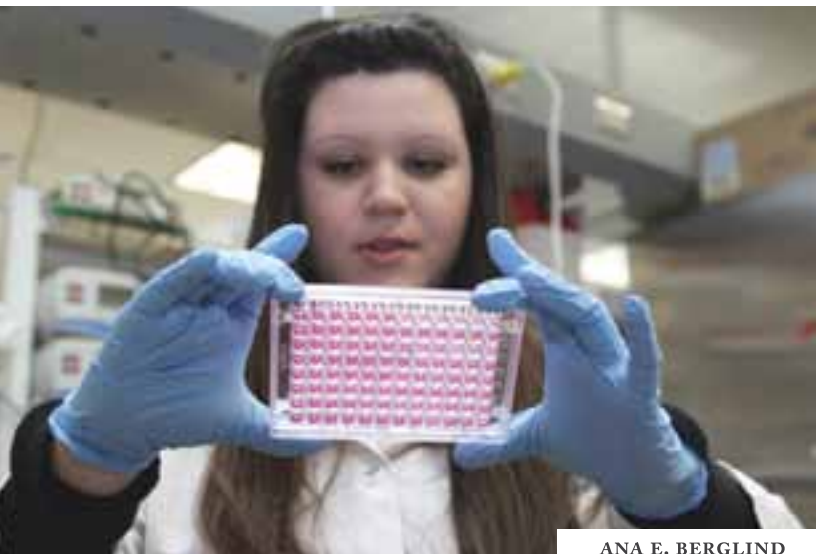
Born in Mazatlan, Mexico, Berglind came to United States at age 9 — first to California and then to Asheville when her father moved there for his job. She completed two associate degrees at Asheville–Buncombe Tech.

She thrived at BRITE. Majoring in pharmaceutical sciences with a minor in chemistry, she graduated in May summa cum laude. In summer, she began working as a technician at the Novartis Institutes for Biomedical Research in Cambridge, Mass., and she is taking graduate courses at MIT. The job and the classes place her on a trajectory to enter a Ph.D. program in 2013.

“BRITE gives us an environment comparable to corporate facilities,” Berglind said. “You can enter a job with confidence because you’re already familiar with the equipment. BRITE doesn’t just expose us to this environment, it forces us to be introduced to it.”

In her research at BRITE, supervised by Associate Professor Gordon Ibeanu, Berglind examined a protein linked to Parkinson’s disease to determine whether it also was linked to Alzheimer’s. As with cancer, the cellular changes involved with development of Parkinson’s and Alzheimer’s occur via signaling pathways — sequences of chemical reactions involving proteins. The goal is to develop drugs to disrupt the process.

“Research is asking a question,” she said. “And the answer can lead to a thousand more questions.”



ANA E. BERGLIND



BRONWYN HOLLIDAY

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**Bronwyn Holliday | B.S., MAY 2010**

Out in the workforce for more than a year now, Bronwyn Holliday is well embarked on her second career, this time as a plant biologist. After working as a chef for more than 20 years in Mississippi and western North Carolina, she enrolled at Asheville–Buncombe Tech and earned her associate degree.

“Then I moved my whole family to Durham so I could go to BRITE,” Holliday said. “Dr. Jay Xie worked very closely with me during my senior year. I got a lot of help from my professors. The lab module gave us a distinct competitive advantage in the marketplace.”

She graduated with a B.S. in pharmaceutical sciences in 2010 and was soon hired by GrassRoots Biotechnology, a small company in Durham. She is part of a team that manipulates genes in plant roots in an effort to develop plants that are stronger and better able to grow in harsh conditions.

“She arrived ready to go,” said Doug Eisner, GrassRoots co-founder and chief operating officer. “She was tremendously skilled in the lab, and she had a deep understanding of the science behind the experiments. We got an exceptional student trained by an exceptional professor.”





CHARLOTTE CRONE

## CHARLOTTE CRONE | JUNIOR

Charlotte Crone is getting her first serious lab time this fall after taking two years of core classes that are the norm for science majors. But she has already made some waves — and she is probably the only BRITE student with a publicist.

A Southern California public relations firm is helping Crone promote her Healthy Choices Project, which is aimed at reducing childhood obesity. Last year, she implemented Healthy Choices as a pilot program at two Durham elementary schools, providing weekly meal plans, food stamp-compliant grocery lists, and recipes to feed a family of four for \$50 a week.

The program caught the attention of the Clinton Global Initiative University, an organization launched by former President Bill Clinton to encourage college students around the world to engage in pressing global issues. The Clinton Initiative accepted Healthy Choices as one of its 2011 “Commitments to Action” and invited Crone to make a presentation at a conference in April in San Diego.

That led to an appearance on ABC’s *“Good Morning America,”* and the PR firm was in touch soon afterward. Part of the appeal, no doubt, is Crone’s own story. She is, by her own account, an untraditional college student. Married, with two chil-

dren and a third on the way, she developed her plan for reducing childhood obesity after losing 100 pounds herself. “I did it the right way,” she said, “over several years, with long-term lifestyle changes — diet and exercise.”

She proposed the Healthy Choices Project when the NCCU Honors Program invited students to submit community service project proposals for a state competition.

“I sat down one night and said, ‘Can I solve this problem?’” she said. “In the end, I realized this is something that can actually work. And as a mother and someone who managed a significant weight loss, I had something to offer on the subject.”

Over the summer, Crone promoted Healthy Choices in a series of interviews with radio stations across the United States, and with stations in Ireland and New Zealand. For the 2011-12 school year, an elementary school in Ahoskie, N.C., a small town in the northeast part of the state, has joined the two Durham schools as a participant in the obesity project. And down the road, there’s the possibility of a book.

A native of Burlington, Crone now lives in Durham. Her husband, Tim Crone, works for a technology company in Morrisville. “He holds things together,” she said. “He’s the mom of the house.”

Crone previously attended Durham Tech, where she earned an associate’s degree in paralegal studies, thinking it was a marketable skill. A professor there encouraged her to be “more than a glorified paper-pusher,” she said, and that led her toward pursuing a science degree.

“I think he had Duke or UNC in mind,” Crone said, “but I’ve been very happy here — I couldn’t ask for a better experience.”

**A Southern California public relations firm is helping Crone promote her Healthy Choices Project, which is aimed at reducing childhood obesity.**





# A LESSON IN SERVICE



BY ANGIE BASIOUNY

## LAW SCHOOL USES VIDEO LINK TO TEACH, HELP OTHERS

The statistics are staggering. In North Carolina, a total of 3.2 million people — more than a third of the state's population — are eligible for help from Legal Aid of North Carolina, a nonprofit law firm that provides free services to low-income residents.

The number of people in need has risen so rapidly in the last two years of a sputtering economy that the organization has been forced to turn away 50 to 80 percent of those who come to its door, Legal Aid Executive Director George Hausen Jr. said.

"Categorically, we're talking about the poorest of the poor," he said.

That's why TALIAS is so important. The acronym stands for Technology Assisted Legal Instruction And Service, the latest project to emerge from the North Carolina Central University School of Law. It's an ambitious effort to pull together teaching, technology and the public service component that is the law school's hallmark.

TALIAS is a videoconferencing link that connects NCCU with 22 of the 25 Legal Aid offices in the state and four other historically black public universities: Elizabeth City State, Winston-Salem State, Fayetteville State and North Carolina A&T. The law school can use this virtual link to reach a broader population of clients served by its 14 clinical programs, which pair law students with low-income residents who need free help with everything from paperwork to representation in court. The students are supervised by practicing attorneys.

With TALIAS, issues of transportation, cost and access for low-income clients, especially those living in rural areas, become a thing of the past. A broadband link means a 24-year-old Elizabeth City man who can't get a job because of a misdemeanor



# TALIAS

is a videoconferencing link that connects NCCU with 22 of the 25 Legal Aid offices in the state and four other historically black public universities.



## NCCU SCHOOL OF LAW CLINICAL PROGRAMS

• Civil litigation • Criminal defense • Criminal prosecution • Domestic violence • Family law • Juvenile law • Veterans' law • Street law • Small business • Dispute Resolution Institute • Pro bono • Low-income taxpayers • Foreclosure prevention • File-it-yourself

received in his teens can connect with a law student in Durham who can walk him through the process of clearing his record, for example.

"Technology is one of the things we can use to fill the gap," Hausen said. "There are thousands of people who will benefit from this. It could not have come at a better time."

The project is funded by a \$1.9 million grant from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, which is part of the U.S. Department of Commerce. The grant was contained in a \$7.2 billion package in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 to expand access to broadband services throughout the country.

"We felt like this grant was written for us," said Greg Clinton, director of Information

Technology and Facility Management at NCCU, who likes to boast that NCCU comes up first in a Google search of "telepresence in law schools." With the integration of virtual classrooms, lecture capture, distance learning and other digital features, the law school has been on the leading edge of technology for years.

TALIAS is housed in a conference room in the first floor of the School of Law building. The room is appointed with two tiers of seating so participants can look up at a panorama of high-definition screens that span the wall.

"One of the great things about this room is you can push content — video, PowerPoint, anything else," Clinton said.

The project was unveiled June 3 with a celebration that drew nearly 100 guests, including

Elizabeth City State Chancellor Willie Gilchrist, who submitted a letter of support with the grant application, and Fayetteville State Chancellor James Anderson.

Anderson quipped that he's so impressed with TALIAS that he expects to turn on his television soon and find the newest hit series, "CSI NCCU Law School."

"I'm glad we're part of this partnership," he said. "Most partnerships down the road will be defined by technology. They will move from technology-assisted to technology-driven."

The project has special meaning for NCCU alumnus J.C. Cole, a Superior Court judge who lives in Elizabeth City. He pointed to the difficulty faced by low-income people in his community who are denied access to justice because of money, poor literacy, transportation and other obstacles.

"It's outstanding beyond my imagination to see something like this," said Cole, his voice breaking with emotion. "I'm from a rural background myself. That's why it's so important to me."

The unveiling was a proud moment for NCCU Chancellor Charlie Nelms, who told the crowd he was grateful for the collaboration that made the project possible.

But it's not about the university, he said. It's about serving the men and women of North Carolina.

"The amount of justice you receive should not be dependent on the where you live," he said. "The value is greater than that."





## NO LONGER JUST FOR BOOKS

THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION HAS CHANGED MANY THINGS AT THE SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCES, BUT NOT ITS MISSION

BY PAUL V. BROWN JR. AND ROB WATERS

When NCCU first began offering library education in 1939, children, college students and adults walked through town or across campus to enter bricks-and-mortar libraries. The information found inside those walls existed entirely in ink-on-paper form. Library users learned how to navigate the place by mastering an ink-on-index-card catalog.

Seventy-two years later, it would be hard to imagine a discipline more transformed by the digital revolution than library science — or an occupation more changed than that of the librarian. Today we read virtual books without going near a library or touching a piece of paper. Entirely new fields of librarianship have emerged to keep pace with the explosion of information. Library students today need to be trained in areas such as information retrieval, building and managing databases, and metadata — which is data about data.



So how have these changes affected the underlying mission at NCCU's School of Library and Information Sciences?

In the most fundamental way, very little, says Dean Irene Owens. "What hasn't changed is information," she said. "We manage information, and we produce leaders in the field."

The School of Library and Information Sciences (SLIS) is one of 52 graduate-level library/information science programs in the U.S. and Canada, and the only one at a historically black institution. It produces the most African-American graduates by far of all the programs, but it is also among the most diverse. Its enrollment of 300-plus is roughly half white, with significant numbers of Asian, Hispanic, American Indian and international students.

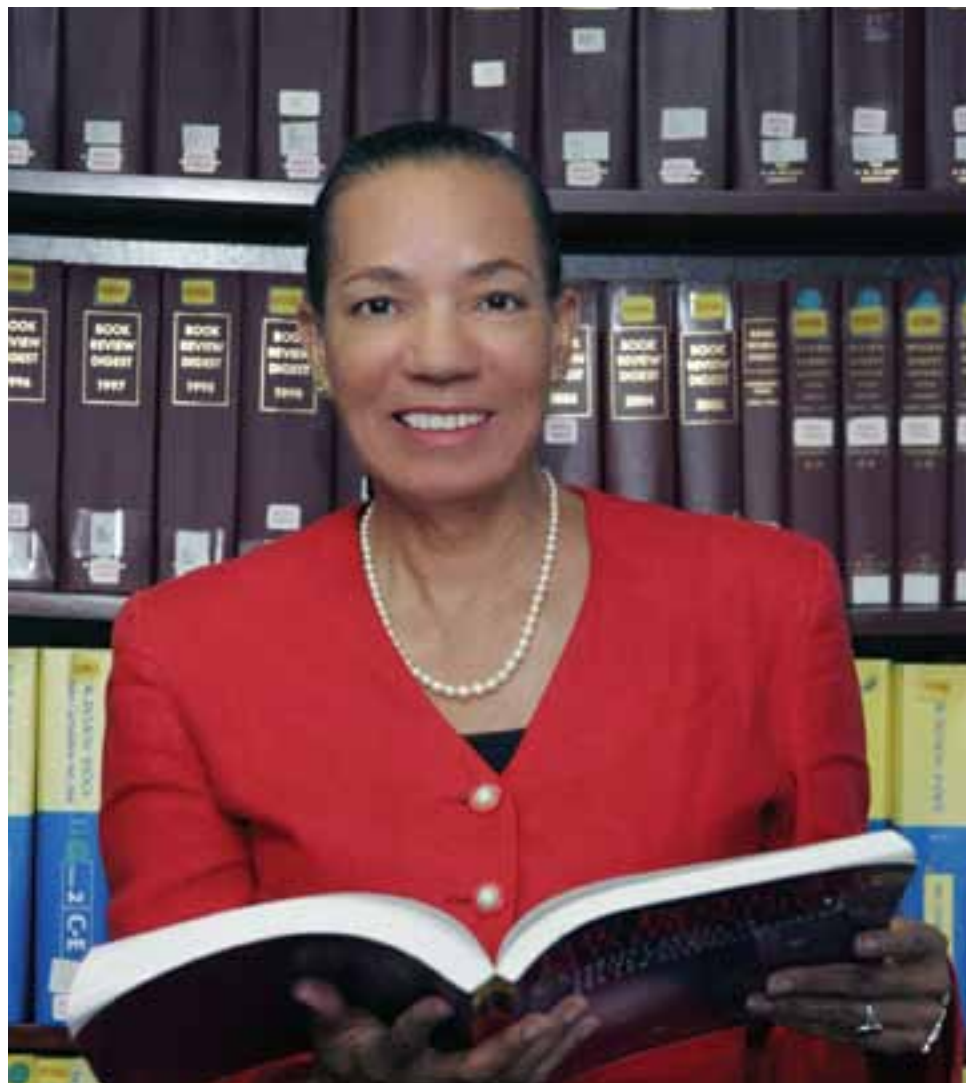
Housed in the James E. Shepard Memorial Library, the library school sits in the heart of campus. One of its first faculty members was Majorie Shepard, daughter of NCCU founder James E. Shepard. In 1939, it became just the second of the university's academic units to obtain authority to confer a professional degree, after only the School of Law. The library curriculum was designed to produce a stream of librarians for African-American youngsters in then-segregated public schools in North Carolina.

Originally, students earned a bachelor's degree in the major. The bachelor's program was discontinued in 1943. The master's program in Library Science was initiated in 1950, with the first M.L.S. degree awarded the next year. The School of Library Science was renamed the School of Library and Information Sciences in 1984.

SLIS course offerings are geared toward working professionals, with a wide range of evening and Saturday classes. Many are offered online.

## 'A MOVING TARGET'

Today, the state of the art seems to advance by the month. Billions of bits of data once stored on mainframe computers that took up entire floors of a building now can be slipped into a purse or pocket. Librarians check out DVDs and man-



**"We teach students how to use databases and how to build them. We offered our first digital library course in 2006 and are offering it as an area of concentration this fall."**

**—DR. IRENE OWENS, DEAN,  
SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCES**

age computer access — and must know how to protect and preserve each of those media. The pace of change presents a constant challenge to those who teach and train librarians and information experts.

"We're always shooting at a moving target," Owens said. And she offered

some examples of what librarians are taught these days.

"We teach students how to use databases and how to build them," she said. "We offered our first digital library course in 2006 and are offering it as an area of concentration starting this fall." Among



other things, digital library students learn to compile, catalogue, search and deliver to customers relevant information that otherwise might simply be floating around the Internet.

"Information retrieval didn't exist as a term 40 years ago, and now we offer a course in it," Owens said. "Librarians need to be highly skilled at locating, evaluating and organizing information in multiple formats. There will always be a need for reference librarians because they're experts at this; they understand search logic."

The electronic age has changed how libraries function in a variety of ways. A university library today, for example, devotes less energy and money than in decades past toward physical acquisition of new books. And it is likely to be part of a consortium of libraries whose members freely share what they have. NCCU, for example, is part of a consortium with Duke, UNC-CH and N.C. State University.

"It's not what you own, but what you have access to," Owens said. And of course, most of the access is now digital. "Much of our money today goes to buying access to databases," she said.

The emphasis on access also means finding ways to make "hidden collections" available to broader audiences. The term applies to special collections of books or documents that exist in one place only. If they are digitized, they can be shared via the Internet with researchers everywhere. But the process isn't simple; the software system involved, CONTENTdm, is widely used and versatile — and difficult to master.

Even the mission of local public libraries, that most traditional of workplaces for the librarian, has changed dramatically. Public libraries have become job centers, especially in low-income areas.

"People who don't own a computer use the ones at libraries — to apply for jobs, seek information about health care, and perform other tasks they can only do online," Owens said. "And librarians need to know their needs and be able to respond to them."

An area of particular interest to the NCCU library faculty is the long-standing challenge of reaching under-served communities. In the old days, low-income people, minorities and those in rural areas suffered from limited access to libraries. Today, that disparity extends to information in general, as the same communities lack access to computers and broadband Internet service.

## A RANGE OF SPECIALTIES

A graduate of the Library School once was destined to work in either a public or school library. Now graduates can pick from an array of specialties. One notable specialty is medical librarianship, and the school has received two grants from the National Institutes of Health's National Library of Medicine — the largest digital library in the world — to offer training in this area.

Since 1989, SLIS has offered a joint degree in law librarianship and legal information systems. In 1990, the school introduced an interdisciplinary program in Information Science leading to the Master of Information Science (M.I.S.) degree — for students seeking expertise in mining and using data. That's important to agencies such as the Central Intelligence Agency, which recruits at the school every year. The School also offers a

joint Master of Business Administration/Master of Information Sciences degree with the School of Business.

Associate Professor Pauletta Bracy, a two-time winner of the NCCU Award for Excellence in Teaching (1987 and 1994), remembers when she taught students how to operate reel-to-reel tape recorders, and when microfiche was cutting edge.

Regardless of advances, Bracy said, her aim is to prepare students to master the media.

"I want my students who graduate from NCCU to be able to walk into any library and be familiar with the technologies," she said.

The quality of NCCU's graduates doesn't go unnoticed, said Bracy, who began teaching in the School in 1981 and is now also director of the Office of University Accreditation.

"In library circles, we are very well respected," she said. "Our graduates are in primary roles. And our programs are chosen not only for their academic integrity but also because they are delivered at a convenient time for many people, in the evening and on weekends.

"So we are on top. We're good."

So good that the school received \$1.7 million from the Laura Bush Foundation

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# class notes

PROMOTIONS | APPOINTMENTS | ANNOUNCEMENTS

## 30s | 40s

'39 **JOHN ODIS SMITH** (B.S.) and '49 **MARY HESTER SMITH** of Durham celebrated 65 years of marriage on Sunday, June 19, at White Rock Baptist Church after the Sunday morning service. The couple married on June 29, 1946. They have two children, Nate Smith and Joyce Campbell.

### A FAMILY TRADITION

Seventy-eight years have passed since **BEULAH KEARNEY-WILLIAMS** earned her degree at North Carolina College. Since then eight other members of the family have come to NCCU, the most recent being **JEAN ROGERS**, who finished her degree in May 2010. She is the granddaughter of Kearney-Williams.

"It's a tradition for the women in my family to attend NCCU and the men to attend North Carolina A&T," said Rogers, a speech pathologist in Charlotte. "That's because of my grandmother, who was here during the time of Dr. Shepard." Kearney-Williams arrived on the campus of what was then NCC in 1928. She and her parents were greeted by James E. Shepard, NCCU's founder, and she later worked as a student employee on the campus. She graduated in 1932.



In 1967, Rogers' aunt, Jean Williams, enrolled at NCCU and eight years later her mother, **KAYE ROGERS**, completed her master's degree. Other family members who attended NCCU include Rogers' father, **STERLING ROGERS**, cousin **AMURA CAMERON** and great-aunt **CYNTHIA FLOOD**.

Rogers said members of her family have attended a commencement ceremony in nearly every decade since the 1930s. In May, she was on hand to watch her boyfriend, Steven Moore, receive his MBA degree.

"The experience at NCCU is wonderful," said Rogers. "They go the extra mile to help you get to where you need to be." Rogers also credits the student newspaper, the Campus Echo for helping to develop her writing skills. "I met so many people through the paper, and it is because of the Echo that I know about the university."

## 50s

'51 **MYRTLE BOYKIN SAMPSON**, Ph.D. (B.S.), authored a book, "Crazy Lady: Achievement Against the Odds." The book includes memories and photos from her undergraduate years at NCCU.

'52 **JOHN H. LUCAS** (M.A.) and '57 **THE HON. JEANNE HOPKINS LUCAS** (B.A.) are being jointly honored with the naming of Lucas Middle School, which opened in August in northern Durham. The two Lucases are not related, but they share a long commitment to education. John Lucas was principal of Durham's Hillside High School for more than 20 years and also served on the school board. Jeanne Hopkins Lucas spent her early career as a teacher and administrator in Durham schools, then represented a Durham district in the North Carolina Senate from 1993 until her death in 2007.

'59 **SARAH M. BELL-LUCAS** (B.S.) was honored during the 2011 Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference basketball tournament as NCCU's 2011 distinguished alumna.

## 60s

'67 **GEORGE W. REID** (B.A.) was named executive director of the Illinois higher education system by the Illinois Board of Higher Education. The executive director oversees nine public universities, 48 community colleges and 135

private and for-profit colleges and universities. Reid is a former history professor and dean at NCCU.

'68 **MASON BROOKS** (B.S.) was honored for his 40 years of service to the Boy Scouts of America at St. Joseph's AME Church.

## 70s

'71 **INGRID WATSON-MILLER** (B.A.) was the recipient of the South Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities 2011 Excellence in Teaching Awards. Watson-Miller was nominated by Claflin University, where she is an assistant professor of Spanish.

'72 **OPHELIA GARMON-BROWN** (B.S.) was named Charlotte's 2010 Woman of the Year and served as speaker at the March 30 "A Woman's Place" event in Charlotte.

'75 **MICHAEL G. JONES SR.** (B.A.) and Nellie T. Jones, owners and operators of Ellis D. Jones & Sons Funeral Home of Durham, were featured in the June 2011 issue of *Black Enterprise Magazine*. The article, titled "A Family Affair," highlights the passing of family businesses from one generation to the next.

'76 **QUAN WILLIAMS** (B.S.), chief strategist for the Quan Co., served as a presenter for the Quality Service Initiative Lunch and Learn Series at NCCU. Williams provided tips on income protection, alternative safe investing and tax-free income stream.



**'77 KEITH HAYWOOD** (B.A.) is the owner of the first Bojangles franchise in Washington. The franchise opened on March 31 in Union Station.

**'78 & '94 ATTORNEY KENNETH D. GIBBS SR.** (BAC, J.D.) served as a presenter for the Training/Organizational Development and QSI Lunch and Learn Series at NCCU. Gibbs provided tips on tax preparation. He is a partner at Thomas & Gibbs CPAs PLLC.

**'78 BETTINA C. SHUFORD**, Ph.D. (B.A.), was named associate vice chancellor for student affairs at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

**'79 CAROL RUSSELL JOHN-SON** (BSN) was honored by the NCCU Alumni Association Nursing Alumni Chapter with the 2011 Distinguished Alumni Award during the 15th annual Helen S. Miller Lectureship and Luncheon.

## 90s

**'90 ANNETTE TAYLOR** (B.A.) was named executive director of N.C. Center for Women in Public Service (NCCWPS), a nonpartisan organization that prepares women for elected and appointed offices statewide. Taylor was program manager with the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation before her NCCWPS appointment.

**'93 TYRIS JONES** (B.A.) competes and entertains at the Storytelling Festival of Carolina. Jones was named the winner of the 2008 "Bold-Faced Liars' Showdown" held in Laurinburg, N.C.

**'96 SHELLI M. CARPENTER** (B.A.) was named the 2011 Educator of the Year by the Vienna Tysons Regional Chamber of Commerce at its annual awards dinner on July 13. Carpenter has been with Fairfax County (Va.) Public Schools since 2002.

**'97 EMMETT TILLEY** (M.A.) celebrated his retirement after 25 years of service to Durham Public Schools. He most recently served as principal of Githens Middle School.

**'97 JOHN WILLIAMS** (B.A.) was named WRAL's Teacher of the Week. Williams is a fifth-grade math and science teacher at Glenn Elementary in Durham.

**'98 SHELLEY C. DAVIS** (B.S.) was named senior associate athletic director and senior woman administrator at Howard University. Davis is the former SWAC assistant commissioner for championships. She is the first female graduate of NCCU to become a Certified Athletic Trainer.

**'99 LEONARDO WILLIAMS** (B.A.) was featured in the NEA Magazine in an article highlighting his efforts with at-risk boys. Williams currently serves on the NCCU Teaching Fellows Program Advisory Board and is the Southern High School Director of Bands.

## 00s

**'02 CHARMINE S. FULLER COOPER** (B.A.) received the N.C. Department of Administration award for her work in reconciliation and justice for sterilization victims of the N.C. Eugenics Board program. Cooper serves as executive director of the N.C. Justice for Sterilization Victims Foundation.

**'02 DEVON WHITE** (J.D.) was named president of N.C. Center for Voter Education. White joined the center's board in 2006 and previously served as the center's vice president.

**'04 TAKESHA TRAPP** (BAC.) was named 2011 Teacher of the Year at Pearisontown Elementary School in Durham.

**'06 DENEESHA EDWARDS** (B.A.) placed second in multimedia project category in the N.C. Press Association awards contest. Edwards is on the staff of The Dispatch in Lexington, N.C.

**'06 MICHAEL RUSSELL** (B.A.) was named the Person County Schools Teacher of the Week on Jan. 24.

**'07 JASON JOWERS** (B.A.) was named 2011 Durham Public Schools Teacher of the Year. Jowers was selected from the district's 54 schools. He is a history teacher at the Southern School of Engineering.

**'08 DELVIN VICK** (M.A.) was appointed principal of Githens Middle School in Durham.

**'09 ARINE LOWERY** (M.A.) was named 2011 Teacher of the Year at Parkwood Elementary School in Durham.

**'09 CASSIE KING** (B.A.) was inducted into the East Wake High School Athletic Hall of Fame. King now teaches at East Wake and serves as the junior varsity girls basketball coach.

**'10 DYLAN GALLOWAY** (B.S.) delivered the keynote address for the Class of 2011 McMichael High School Baccalaureate Service. He is currently the chair of the

Rockingham County chapter of the Young Democrats of North Carolina.

## CLASS YEAR NOT AVAILABLE

**JAMES HOLLAND** (MBA) opened a CPA partnership with **WILLIAM BROWN** in Richmond, Va.

**KIM ROMAINE BUSH** (MPA) married the **REV. WALTER MACK** at St. Peters Church and World Outreach Center on May 21 in Winston-Salem. Dr. Mack is a former university chaplain of NCCU.

**MARCUS ANDERSON** released his third solo album entitled **NOW** on June 28 in Durham.

**MELVIN ALSON** (B.S.) served as one of the founders of the International Civil Rights Center and Museum in Greensboro. The museum helped to commemorate the anniversary of the Greensboro Four Sit-In with an exhibit.

## IN MEMORIAM

**'34 LAURA ELIZABETH SPEARS MALONE** (B.A.) of Charlotte, March 4, 2011

**'38 HILMA JOILET SATTERFIELD JONES** (B.A.) of Plant City, Fla., June 4, 2011. She was a native of Roxboro.

**'38 JUANITA YEATES MOORE** (BSC) of Durham, May 16, 2011. She served as an administrative assistant at NCCU, Fayetteville State University, Elizabeth City State University and Norfolk State University.

**'40 VERSIE MAE BURWELL FIELDS** (BSC) of Oxford, April 1, 2011. She was 94.



## IN MEMORIAM continued

'45 and '54 **MARY JEAN MCKIS-SICK MCNEILL** (B.A., M.A.) of Durham, on May 2, 2011.

'46 **BERNADINE KENNEDY RELEFORD** (B.A.) of Montclair, N.J., Feb. 19, 2011

'48 & '49 **THOMAS ELLIS MALONE SR.** Ph.D. (B.S., M.S.) of Potomac, Md., March 7, 2011. He earned a Ph.D. in biology from Harvard University in 1952 and returned to NCCU (then North Carolina College) as a zoology professor from 1952 to 1958. He then held a succession of academic and research appointments in the U.S. and abroad; in 1969, he was appointed associate director of the National Institutes of Health, and he continued to serve at NIH until 1983, receiving numerous awards and rising to deputy director and acting director of the vast federal research organization.

'48 **ALENE COLEY YOUNG** (B.A./M.L.S.) of Oxford, June 29, 2011

'49 **DENISON DOVER GARRETT** (B.S.) of Pitt County, May 27, 2011. He was the first African-American male elected to Pitt County Board of Commissioners. He also led the Pitt County chapter of the NAACP for nearly 20 years.

'49 **WALTER CLARENCE VANHOOK** (B.S.) of Norfolk, Va., June 23, 2011

'52 **SOLOMON JEFFERSON** (B.S.) of Houston, Texas, April 29, 2011

'56 **BETTYE P. MEBANE** (B.A.) of High Point, March 26, 2011

'57 **ROBERT LEON PERRY** (B.A.) of Durham, Feb. 22, 2011

'58 **JOYCE BARNES McDONALD** (B.A.) of Raleigh, Feb. 18, 2011

'62 **WILMOT BENJAMIN** (B.S.) of Springfield Gardens, N.Y., Jan. 21, 2011

'61 **EMMA T. HUNTER** (M.A.) of Columbus, Ga., Feb. 8, 2011

'63 **DOROTHY SHARPE JOHNSON** (B.S.) of Matthews, N.C., May 31, 2011. She earned a Doctor of Ministry degree at Cordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. She served as pastor of Indian Hill AME Zion Church in Fort Mill, S.C., for seven years.

'63 **DORIS BLENDELL SOMMERVILLE MONROE** (B.A.) of Raleigh, June 19, 2011

'65 **PAUL LAURENCE LEVINGS-TON II** (B.S.) of Indianapolis, Ind., Feb. 13, 2011

'65 **JERRYE WILLIAMSON MOORING** (B.A.) of Greensboro, March 23, 2011. Mooring received honors for teaching and musical talent and leadership from the National Association for Music Education.

'65 **PATRICIA HARGRAVES WILDER** (B.S.) of Mitchellville, Md., April 29, 2011

'66 **MELVIN R WALKER** (B.S.) of Joliet, Ill., April 25, 2011

'67 **CLARENCE EARL HARDY, JR.** (B.A.) of North Potomac, Md., March 28, 2011

'68 **COLLINS EARL BABER**, M.D. (B.S.) of Durham, May 6, 2011

'68 **FURNEY E. BROWN JR.** (M.A.) of Durham, May 7, 2011. Brown also held a doctoral degree.

## SUBMIT YOUR CLASS NOTES

**Class Notes Policy** Class notes must come first hand from the graduates who have news, a death, birth, or marriage to report. Please send in your information as soon as you have something to share. We welcome news that is no more than a year old.

**Photo Acceptance Policy** Photos will be accepted in these formats: print or digital. You may email your Class Notes photos to <publicrelations@nccu.edu> or mail them to the address at the bottom of this form. We reserve the right to determine the usage of the images submitted based on quality, space, and content.

**CLASS NOTE:** Please fill out completely.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class of \_\_\_\_\_  
Spouse's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Alumnus? ☐ No ☐ Yes Class of \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: Home (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Office (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Birth: \_\_\_\_ Son \_\_\_\_ Daughter Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Marriage: \_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ (Please do not send prior to marriage.)  
Your occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Date assumed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Responsibilities include: \_\_\_\_\_  
Spouse's occupation (if alumnus): \_\_\_\_\_  
News/Promotions/Honors: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature (required) \_\_\_\_\_

Help us keep in touch with your classmates and NCCU. If you have moved, send us your current address and telephone number.

Return this form with your news or story idea to the following address: North Carolina Central University  
Office of Alumni Relations  
2223 Fayetteville Street  
Durham, NC 27707

Toll Free: 866-479-2721

Fax: 919-560-5864

Email: publicrelations@nccu.edu



**'68 WAYNE FARRAR** (B.A.) of District Heights, Md.,  
June 20, 2011

**'70 ESSIE L. ROWSER** (BSN) of Decatur, Ga.,  
March 21, 2011

**'71 BRENDA JOYCE TOWNSEND MARSHALL**  
(B.A./MSW) of Goldsboro, July 8, 2011. She served  
as president of the NCCU Alumni Association Gold-  
Wayne Chapter and was a member-at-large of the  
Executive Committee. She was one of the first gradu-  
ates to earn a degree in social work from NCCU.

**'78 CHRISTINE G. REAVES** (B.A.) of Greensboro,  
May 7, 2011

**'89 JUDITH G. STEWART** of Chapel Hill, May 1, 2011

**'93 MARY A. ERNST** (MLS) of Frederick, Md.,  
April 2, 2011

**'04 PATRICE BARNES WORRELLS** (B.A.) of  
Goldsboro, March 1, 2011. She served as an educa-  
tor in Goldsboro and was a member of the Goldsboro  
Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority.

**'12 ADRIANNE STEVENS** (B.A.) of Durham, June 12,  
2011. Stevens was a rising senior in the elementary  
education program at NCCU.

#### CLASS YEAR NOT AVAILABLE

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**MAMMIE C. BOYD** of Durham, April 27, 2011,  
was a retired NCCU faculty/staff member.

**JERRY M. BROWN** of High Point, Jan. 21, 2011.

**YOUNGIL CHO**, Ph.D., of Raleigh, May 22, 2011.  
He taught in the NCCU School of Business for 29 years  
and for 22 years was the school's associate dean for  
undergraduate studies.

**JAMES CORNELL COLEMAN** of Fort Washington,  
Md., June 6, 2011.

**EFFIE LEE HERNDON HUGHES** of Durham, Feb. 11,  
2011. She was 97 years old and was a retired NCCU  
faculty/staff member.

**HORTENSE SOUTHALL** of Chesapeake, Va.,  
Jan. 7, 2011

**FLOYD WOOD SR.** of Atlanta, Ga., May 8, 2011

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## THE COMMENCEMENT CONDUCTOR CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

On Saturday morning, the outcome was the same. The threatened rain held off. Civil rights hero John Lewis delivered a stirring address. And even with 550 students crossing the stage, collecting baccalaureate diplomas and shaking Chancellor Nelms' hand, the ceremony clocked in at less than three hours.

### Final review

A few weeks later, Wilson convened the committee one last time for a debriefing. He was clearly pleased. "Overall it was a very successful experience for our students and their guests. Our graduates had an enjoyable sendoff."

But the congratulatory session was brief. Wilson's next sentence was "OK, what can we improve upon?" A brief discussion followed, and the consensus that emerged was "not a whole lot." A few more printed programs should be ordered next year, because they nearly ran out Saturday. And the Friday rehearsal for the undergraduate ceremony needs to start an hour earlier.

One thing is clear: Splitting the ceremony worked, and the committee unanimously agrees that the new format should be kept — not least because the graduates from both groups liked it. "Each group seemed to feel they were getting more individual attention," Wilson said.

The maestro was clearly relieved. The weather had been a worry all week — as was the possibility that there was something about the new format he had failed to anticipate.

"The weather kept me awake more than usual because the forecast was so grim," Wilson said. "I also worried a bit about whether we could transition from one ceremony to the other — but I knew we had the human power."

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## NOT JUST FOR BOOKS ANY MORE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 39

for America's Libraries in 2008 to increase the number of African-American, Native American and Hispanic librarians. With the funds, NCCU partnered with 12 counties in North Carolina and provided scholarships to 40 students in library and information sciences.

Dean Owens is obviously proud of the grant, and of the school itself, which "despite being born of Jim Crow, has done a lot of great things."

She is the quintessential librarian. Tall and trim, hair usually pulled back, she speaks in quiet tones but always with a command of her subject. Born in Morven in the North Carolina Sandhills region, she earned her bachelor's degree at Barber-Scotia College, master's degrees from Howard University and the University of Maryland, and a doctorate in library science from UNC-Chapel Hill. She has been a schoolteacher and worked at the Library of Congress. She was head librarian at Howard University's School of Divinity. She moved in 1995 to the School of Information at the University of Texas at Austin, where she was the first African-American professor to earn tenure and won the Texas Excellence in Teaching Award. But Owens decided that she wanted to work at a historically black university. She arrived as dean in 2005.

Looking ahead, Owens said the school must continue producing a diverse group of librarians as well as library academicians. "We want to prepare leaders and practitioners, and we also want to prepare students for Ph.D. work because the need is so great," she said.





## HEMEOOURT ADVANTAGE

BY KYLE SERBA

For six weeks this summer, North Carolina Central University's McDougald-McLendon Gymnasium drew capacity crowds to watch some of the basketball players in the country in action. The Greater NC Pro-Am summer basketball league was the talk of the town, even the nation. It featured NBA players like John Wall, Jerry Stackhouse, Brandon Jennings and Rasheed Wallace, along with a host of local ACC talent from Duke, North Carolina and N.C. State. But when all was said and done, it was a team that included three NCCU men's basketball student-athletes that hoisted the league championship trophy. And the player who captured the most attention was a rising NCCU senior, **DOMINIQUE SUTTON**.



A native of Durham, Sutton used his 6-foot-5, 212-pound muscular frame to dominate the summer league's opposition and thrill his hometown crowd. And while Durham natives remember him for his exploits at C.E. Jordan High School, where he was selected as the conference Player of the Year, Sutton is a fresh face on the NCCU hardwood.

After two years at Jordan High and two more at the Patterson School in Lenoir, N.C., Sutton was considered one of the top high school basketball prospects in the country. He decided to attend Kansas State and play basketball for the Wildcats of the Big 12 conference.

Even as a true freshman during the 2007-08 season at Kansas State, Sutton established himself as a force to be reckoned with, appearing in 19 games, including eight as a starter. His role increased as a sophomore, when he played in all 34 contests with 32 starts. As a junior in 2009-10, he again appeared in all of the squad's 37 games, all but one as a starter. Sutton averaged more than seven points and nearly six rebounds per game to help lead the Wildcats to 29 victories and a trip to the NCAA tournament's Elite Eight.

In spite of his success on the court, something was missing — a regular relationship with his daughter, Nykira, who was back home in North Carolina. "Being away from her for three years, really not being in her life and not seeing her grow, it took a toll on me," Sutton said.

So the Durham native decided to return home to reconnect with his daughter, who turned five years old in April. "Seeing her more on a regular basis, being able to be around her and be in her life ... our relationship is a lot stronger," Sutton explained.

Wanting to continue his academic and athletic pursuits in college, Sutton also reconnected with NCCU men's basketball head coach LeVelle Moton, who coached against Sutton's AAU team when Sutton was a teenager. "He wanted to come back home to be closer to his family," said Moton, "and I certainly respect that."

The coach still remembers hearing the knock on his office door and seeing Sutton walk in. "He said, 'Coach, I've always admired what you stood for and enjoyed how your teams played. How would you feel about me coming to NCCU?'"

"I was like... Wow," Moton recalled. "It was one of the easiest recruiting jobs I've ever done to get one of the best players I've ever had."

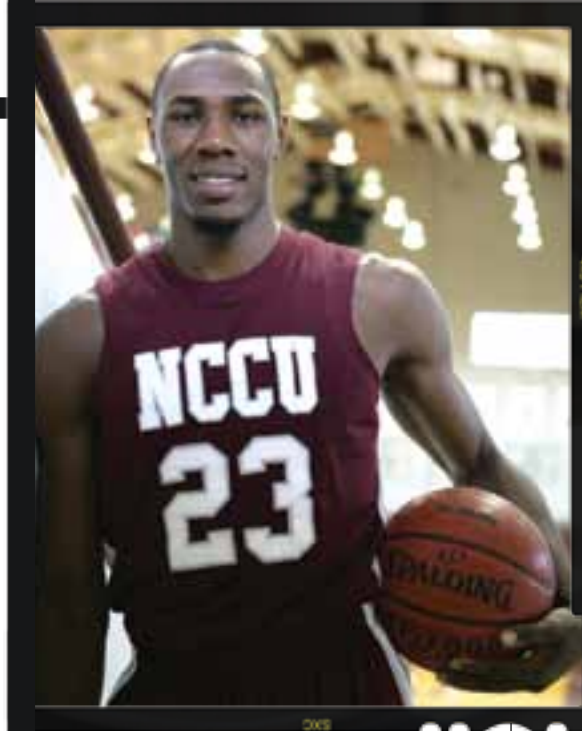
Because of NCAA transfer rules, Sutton had to sit out a year of basketball competition while taking classes at NCCU as a sociology major. Being away from basketball proved to be a challenge. "It was tough," Sutton said. "At one point I was really anxious. But I talked with my family and friends and they said to be patient."

Looking back, Sutton thinks the season without college hoops competition has actually helped. "Sitting out, I got a chance to study the game a little more, watch some film and work on my game a lot more than I've previously done," he said. "It's starting to pay off."

Fans who watched him during the summer league would agree. And while many onlookers were surprised by Sutton's ability to stand out among the best hardwood talent in the Southeast, Moton took it in stride. "I can honestly say that I wasn't surprised, because I've seen him play since he was 12," he said.

"He's a rare breed," Moton added. "His tenacity and fearlessness on the floor... I've never seen anything like it. He has a motor and a chip on his shoulder. He plays every game as if it is his last game ever. I've known him to dominate whoever he plays against, simply because he was tougher."

Sutton's summer league success, along with that of his NCCU teammates,



has created a buzz about the Eagles for the coming basketball season. Expectations for Moton's energized squad are running high, with chatter in the community about a Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference championship and a trip to the NCAA tournament, a stage Sutton has played on before.

"We still have a lot of work to do, including myself," said Sutton. "A lot of the guys don't know what it feels like to go through a conference championship, go to the 'big dance' and upset some big-time teams. We know we can make a lot of history here, but it takes hard work to get to where we want to be."

Moton, entering his third season as the Eagles' head coach, is relying on Sutton's experience to lead his squad. "Every day I am holding him accountable and putting a lot of the burden on his shoulders to lead this team," Moton said. "The great players have a unique way of getting everyone to follow. If the recent past is an indication of what is to come, we have a bright future."

**Sutton's summer league success, along with that of his NCCU teammates, has created a buzz about the Eagles for the coming basketball season.**



# new on campus

NCCU's two newest buildings opened for business in August. Formal dedication ceremonies are planned during the fall semester. Here's a look at what's new on the campus:

## NURSING BUILDING

Located on Alston Avenue, on the former site of Holy Cross Catholic Church. The old stone church building was moved across campus last year to Centennial Square on Fayetteville Street, where it is now called Centennial Chapel.

- **COST:** \$25 million
- **SPECS:** 69,000 square feet over three floors (plus basement and penthouse for mechanical systems)
- **WHAT IT CONTAINS:** The first floor has three classrooms, including a 203-seat auditorium and two 72-seat classrooms; a student services section with a grab-and-go food service and a student lounge. The lobby can accommodate up to about 360 people for receptions. The second floor has a 62-seat classroom, simulated hospital rooms including simulated patients — computer-controlled mannequins and robots that respond like human bodies, quiet study and group-study rooms and locker space for the students. The third floor consists mostly of offices for faculty and staff.



CHIDLEY NORTH  
RESIDENCE HALL



NURSING  
BUILDING

## CHIDLEY NORTH RESIDENCE HALL

Located on the corner of Alston Avenue and Lawson Street, next to the original Chidley Residence Hall

- **COST:** \$30 million
- **SPECS:** 135,000 square feet, four floors
- **WHAT IT CONTAINS:** 517 beds for juniors and seniors; most are in double rooms, each with its own bathroom; there are eight corner suites designed to house four students.
- **FEATURES:** A large laundry room, a big kitchen, a study room, lounges and Wi-Fi throughout every floor. Classroom and computer lab on the second floor
- **NAMED FOR:** The Rev. Howard Chidley (1878-1966), Congregationalist minister from Massachusetts who was a close associate of NCCU founder James E. Shepard. Chidley was a member of the Board of Trustees from 1916 to 1921 and board chairman from 1919 to 1921. He and members of his church provided financial support to the school in its early days for scholarships and special projects. The college awarded him an honorary doctorate in 1917.
- **STATUS OF THE OLD CHIDLEY:** The 60-year-old dormitory is closed, awaiting a renovation expected to start in 2012.





# NORTH CAROLINA CENTRAL UNIVERSITY H.O.M.E.\*COMING

**FOUNDERS DAY . THE PARADE . TAILGATING . ALUMNI DANCE AND MORE**

Welcome H.O.M.E.\* to North Carolina Central University and an exciting week packed with activities. Visit with old friends and meet new ones. It's time to celebrate our school and show off that Eagle Pride.

**\*HOMECOMING OFFICIALLY MADE EPIC | OCT. 23-30, 2011**

**FRI.  
OCT. 28**

**SOCIETY OF GOLDEN  
EAGLES INDUCTION**  
Class of 1961 / 9 a.m.

**WREATH - LAYING  
CEREMONY**  
Hoey Circle

**SOCIETY OF GOLDEN  
EAGLES LUNCHEON**  
Noon / Sheraton  
Imperial Hotel

**GOLF TOURNAMENT**  
Noon / Falls Village Golf  
Club, 115 Village Drive

**CLASS REUNION  
REGISTRATION**  
Consult your class  
contact for information

**REUNION CLASS BANQUET**  
6 p.m. Reception / 7 p.m.  
Dinner / Sheraton Imperial

**EAGLE HOMECOMING CAMP**  
6 p.m. – 2 a.m. / Eagle  
Landing Residence Hall

**PAN-HELLENIC  
STEP SHOW** 7 p.m.

**MAROON AND GRAY  
SOIREE** 9 – 11 p.m.  
Sheraton Imperial Hotel

**SAT.  
OCT. 29**

**HOMECOMING PARADE**  
9 a.m. / Fayetteville St.

**PARADE WATCHING /  
ALUMNI BREAKFAST**  
9 a.m. / Alumni House

**SHEPARD SOCIETY BRUNCH**  
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.  
A.E. Student Union

**RUSS PARR AND THE MORNING  
SHOW CREW | OFFICIAL HBCU  
TAILGATE TOUR** 11 a.m.  
Track and Practice Field / Game  
ticket required for admission.

**HOMECOMING GAME**  
NCCU vs Bethune-  
Cookman University  
2 p.m. / O'Kelly-Riddick  
Stadium

**BLOCK PARTY, WITH  
HOST D. HART '05**  
4 – 6 p.m. / George Street

**HOMECOMING  
EXTRAVAGANZA**  
8:30 p.m. / Sheraton  
Imperial Hotel

**PRE-DAWN/CONCERT**  
11 p.m. / LeRoy T.  
Walker Complex

**SUN.  
OCT. 30**

**NCCU HOMECOMING  
PRAISE AND WORSHIP  
CELEBRATION** 11 a.m.  
B.N. Duke Auditorium

**MISS NCCU TEA**  
2:30 p.m. / A.E. Student  
Union / Invitation Only

**WORSHIP AND PRAISE  
CHOIR GOSPEL CONCERT**  
4 p.m. / B.N. Duke  
Auditorium

All events will be held at the McDougald-McLendon Gymnasium unless otherwise noted. For a full list of events and more details, visit [www.nccu.edu/homecoming](http://www.nccu.edu/homecoming) or pick up your FREE homecoming guide at the Alumni Office (while supplies last).





NORTH  
CAROLINA  
CENTRAL  
UNIVERSITY  
FOUNDED 1910

North Carolina Central University  
1801 Fayetteville Street  
Durham, NC 27707

